

Inaugural notes:
Bush bash
backlash

PAGES 18 & 19

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Crack's in the system

HIGH COST OF A CHEAP DRUG



Inside Israeli prisons

Detention, death, denial

PAGE 9

The deal buster

Fighting the buyout craze

PAGE 12

Salim Muwakkil reports

PAGE 3

Don't cry for Ron, Nicaragua

By William Gasperini

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

Nicaragua welcomed the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency with joyful street rallies celebrating what may prove to be one of the most significant events for this beleaguered nation since the 1979 revolution itself. On January 20 people danced in street processions in the capital. Banners proclaimed "Reagan has gone—the revolution is staying" and "Bush has come, but he won't stop the revolution either."

It was not that thousands of Nicaraguans felt Reagan's departure from power meant Nicaragua's troubles were going with him. Instead Nicaraguans were simply proud at having withstood for eight long years the U.S. administration's incessant efforts to dislodge their government. "Reagan had vowed so many times the Sandinistas would be out of power before he left office," said college student David Baenz at one Managua rally, "and we have foiled his plan. I realize things may not change much under Bush. But at least we know we can take whatever comes."

Outlasting Reagan was, at best, a bittersweet victory, given the contra war's toll. With 50,000 people dead, thousands more wounded or maimed for life and over \$1 billion in damages, Nicaragua is preparing to mark the 10th anniversary of the Sandinista revolution with the future still highly uncertain. At the same time the change in U.S. administration and other political developments in the region offer some hope that the worst may be over.

Whither Washington? The biggest unknown is the course President Bush will take in his approach to Central America. In the coming weeks "diplomatic initiatives" are likely to come from both sides. Observers generally feel that the new U.S. president will be more pragmatic in his policies than was Reagan.

Nicaragua tried to send a positive signal the very hour Bush was being inaugurated, when the Sandinista government granted U.S. diplomats visas that had been denied after the expulsion of Ambassador Richard Melton last year. U.S. chargé d'affaires Rohn Leonard noted the move could lead to better relations, but refrained from offering any official U.S. reaction.

The Sandinistas are also ready to present a proposal for direct talks with Washington "at the opportune moment." Press leaks indicate Bush may have similar thoughts, even if just to convince Congress that the White House is serious about peace efforts. Nicaragua says it is willing to discuss Washington's security concerns, including a reduction in troop levels, but the U.S. is expected to

instead emphasize substantial political changes within Nicaragua.

In the meantime the contras are likely to receive more "humanitarian" assistance, although they appear finished as an effective military force. "Sooner or later you have to admit failure," said political analyst David MacMichael on a recent visit to Managua. "Ronald Reagan could conduct foreign policy based on ideology, but George Bush will have to confront reality."

Contras seek the limelight: Well aware that diplomacy will predominate in the months ahead, contra leaders have made two proposals to renew peace talks with Managua. But the proposals only highlighted the deep divisions within the rebel command. Hard-liners clustered around military leader Enrique Bermudez denounced moderate Alfredo Cesar's proposal for various political changes as a "sellout."

Although the contra directorate later met in Washington to smooth things over and at least claim unity, the rivalries surfaced violently in Honduras, where 12,000 rebels now languish in camps close to the Nicaraguan border. On January 7 high-ranking contra military commander

INSIDE STORY

Manuel Rugama was assassinated in a hail of gunfire in Tegucigalpa, reportedly by elements opposed to Bermudez.

Just days later Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyo was in Washington discussing his country's "contra problem" with Ronald Reagan and George Bush, who reportedly declined to make any firm commitment on what would happen to the rebels.

Bush's appointments lend credence to the view that larger issues, such as the foreign debt crisis, will carry more weight in foreign policy in the years ahead. New Secretary of State James Baker drew up a debt-relief plan several years ago when he was head of the Treasury Department. And New York lawyer Robert Helander—likely to replace hard-line hawk Elliott Abrams as assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs—is also known to favor concentrating on such global matters. His appointment would likely reduce the U.S. obsession with Nicaragua.

More diplomacy: Another key regional player will be Carlos Andres Perez, who will become Venezuelan president February 2 for the second time. Known for his diplomatic skills, Perez has strong influence in both Washington and Central America, having been Venezuela's leader in the '70s, when he supported the Nicaraguan revolution.

Although his relationship with the Sandinistas has cooled somewhat, Perez is in a position to assist the regional peace process, perhaps beginning with discussions among regional leaders attending his inauguration (possibly including even Cuba's Fidel Castro). Perez's return to the political scene was partly behind the call by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias to postpone a new summit of the five Central American presidents, originally scheduled for January 15-16 in San Salvador. After having agreed on the date, Arias made a last-minute request to delay until February, saying it was necessary to see what direction the new U.S. policy will take in the region.

The summit agenda was originally expected to focus primarily on verifying compliance with the stalled 1987 Central American peace pact, especially Nicaragua's demand that Honduras cease providing refuge to the contras. But the new date may shift emphasis onto the issue of "democratization of Nicaragua," and allow Bush to make a first move. The democratization theme will likely prevail with or without a summit. Political pressures on Managua are sure to increase both internally and externally, as the Sandinista's opponents try to capitalize on discontent due to the steadily deteriorating economic situation.

Economic chaos: Last year ended with an inflation rate topping 20,000 percent, easily the highest in Latin America, and undetermined—but very high—unemployment. Exports continued a long decline reaching just about \$180 million—compared with over \$400 million in 1984—with imports at approximately \$900 million. Compounding the grim figures are the estimated \$840 million in damages caused by Hurricane Joan in October.

In the face of such economic troubles the government has announced major budget cuts in all sectors, most significantly in defense (29 percent) and the internal security ministry (40 percent). The central bank is also tightly restricting the money supply in a further move to contain the runaway inflation.

But the more difficult problem is declining production, which most economists blame as the chief cause of inflation. In a rare sign of cooperation between the government and private sectors, various "consultation commissions" have been meeting in recent months in each sector of the economy.

With the Sandinistas well aware of their vulnerability on the economic front, the government has apparently moved to prepare for what it expects will be a shift under Bush to a more covert strategy of promoting internal opposition activities. Authorities did allow a January 15 opposition march in Managua, the first since the rally last July in the town of Nandaime that ended in violence.

All but two of 15 opposition parties participated in the rally, from the far right to the Communists and Socialists, and the march passed without incident. The activity succeeded in attracting only 5,000 people, however, and disunity was evident as each group vied for attention in impromptu street-corner speeches where various leaders called for the Sandinistas' overthrow.

Just blocks away a crowd ten times larger was enjoying an all-star baseball game, perhaps indicative of the enthusiasm most Nicaraguans feel for the continuing political polemics.

William Gasperini is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.



Left to right: Karman, Nick-Bisgaard, O'Donnell and Finley.

CONTENTS

Inside Story: Sandinistas' revolution outlasts Reagan's	2
America's tragic crack-up	3
In Short	4
New York—the case against Giuliani	6
A tale of two deficits—the black and white of red ink	7
Ohioans fight a different kind of nuclear war	8
Israel's prisons lock in the harsh truth	9
China's market reforms let a thousand bosses bloom	11
The Deal Buster—a union leader fights corporate buyouts	12
Editorial	14
Letters Sylvia	15
Dialogue: Anti-communism and the myth of safety in numbness ..	16
Ashes & Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn	17
Life in the U.S.: Bush bash trashed	18
Inaugural sin-dex	18
Atwater's R&B whitewash	19
In Print: Steel industry goes for the steal	20
In the Arts: Theater—the truth of <i>Pravda</i>	21
Classifieds/Life in Hell	23
Ronald Reagan's exclusive <i>In These Times</i> interview	24

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Intensity and flow at *In These Times*

Marx wrote that "constant labor of one uniform kind destroys the intensity and flow of man's animal spirits." That having been said, let us introduce four new *In These Times* staff members whose varied backgrounds ensure that their animal spirits are in good shape.

Bill Finley is the paper's new associate publisher. He is the former general manager of Earth Theater, an arts-education troupe that toured the U.S. and Europe in the '70s. A reggae-rap musician and graphic artist, Bill has also acted on stage and film, and produced and hosted radio talk and music programs.

Peter Karman, who joins *In These Times* as an assistant managing editor, began in journalism with Hearst's *New York Mirror*, then worked on union newspapers, edited trade and travel magazines, served as news and information manager for Air France and most recently ran his own copywriting shop. He is a longtime *In These Times* contributor.

Kevin O'Donnell, the new co-business manager, joined the paper after teaching in Madrid and working for a U.S. Agency for International Development-financed project, the Costa Rican Investment Promotion Program.

Mary Nick-Bisgaard joins *In These Times* as copy editor after teaching English in Japan.

By Salim Muwakkil

THE SPREADING CRACK-COCAINE EPIDEMIC IS confounding drug experts, distressing law enforcement officials and fueling arguments of conspiracy theorists who insist that somebody wants to wipe out African-Americans. In less than five years this cheap, smokable form of cocaine has ousted heroin as the drug of choice in many American inner-cities. In the process, it has accelerated the decay of those communities.

Researchers are discovering that crack is among the most addictive substances they've ever studied; many contend that users become addicted after only one ingestion, although the process usually takes a few months. Drug abuse experts also report that crack addiction is more intractable than other substance addictions and that crack abusers are harder to help than any other substance abusers.

Not only is crack a new order of danger, but its peculiar properties seem to target those communities already reeling from an unending series of dislocations. Thus, the drug has found its greatest welcome among the African-American—and, to a smaller extent, the Hispanic—underclass in America's inner-cities.

Crime follows crack even closer than it did heroin, according to police officials. In Brooklyn, N.Y., for example, police say crack now is a factor in half of all felony drug arrests, compared with none in 1985, the year crack first appeared in New York City. Police officials in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Houston, Dallas, New Orleans and Miami blame crack for their cities' climbing murder rates.

Rock and role models: The development and successful marketing of crack has generated windfall profits for all of those along the supply pipeline. This infusion of capital helps fuel the alternative economy that inner-city youth find so attractive.

And why not? After all, their prospects for legitimate employment in anything but low-paying service jobs are slight to nil. For too many inner-city families, a son employed in

Crack has found its greatest welcome among the African-American—and, to a smaller extent, the Hispanic—underclass. "Crack addiction is most frequent in the communities where people feel less good about themselves," says one expert.

'The fast food of drugs' poisons the inner-city

the underground economy is the difference between making it and homelessness. These young drug operatives—typically black males—become community role models or recidivists in the criminal justice cycle. Sometimes they are both. Either way, the African-American community counts the loss of wasted potential.

Researchers are also discovering that women are more susceptible to crack than to other street drugs. In fact, officials at New York City's Human Resources Administration say that over the past two years crack use has led to a 225 percent increase in child neglect and abuse cases involving drugs. During the same two-year period, the number of New York City babies born with drugs in their urine rose 284 percent.

Recent studies have found that a wide spectrum of ill effects can result from fetal exposure to cocaine, and that retarded growth in the womb and subtle neurological abnormalities can result from even one exposure. The findings suggest that cocaine addiction is causing an epidemic of damaged infants, most of whom are born into families least able to provide the necessary remedial support.

What is crack? In its basic form crack is prepared by mixing cocaine, baking soda and water. However, additional ingredients—substances like procaine, vitamin B-12, etc.—often are added to the basic formula as crack dealers seek to distinguish their product from others. Methamphetamine (speed) has become a popular mixing agent in recent months, according to a counselor at a New York City drug abuse program.

Most experts agree that crack entered the U.S. through Miami and Southern California in early 1985, arriving in New York City by the middle of that year. By early 1989 it had made an appearance in all but a few states.

"Crack is so addicting because it delivers such a concentrated dose, such a rush of cocaine to the brain's pleasure center," explains Dr. Bruce Rounsaville of the Yale School of Medicine. He is a member of a research team studying aspects of the crack epidemic for the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

"The faster the cocaine level is absorbed into the bloodstream and delivered to the brain, the greater the euphoria," Rounsaville adds. "And the most efficient way to raise the cocaine level in the blood is to smoke it." Rounsaville lists several other reasons for crack's popularity: "It's potent, very cheap [as little as \$5 a vial], portable—and it's profitable."

The Yale researcher also attributes crack's popularity to cocaine traffickers' astute marketing techniques. Cocaine use was declining among the traditional middle-class buyers, so they had to create a new market. Crack fit the bill perfectly because "it's sort of like the fast food of drugs," he notes dryly.

Freebasing: Smokable cocaine preparations have been used for many years, he contends, noting Richard Pryor's widely publicized run-in with cocaine freebase. "Although

they are manufactured by slightly different chemical processes, there are few essential differences between crack and freebase," Rounsaville contends. "Freebasing cocaine is time-consuming and, as Pryor's experience demonstrated, dangerous."

Manufacturing crack doesn't take as long and is not as volatile as freebasing—freebasing cocaine requires a flammable substance like ether to purify the cocaine—but it requires a substantial financial investment for the purchase of enough cocaine to make the process profitable. However, the youthful age of most crack abusers has alienated many established cocaine dealers who prefer an older, more affluent clientele. Thus, urban street gangs have become the dominant crack distributors in most large cities.

Although he's fully aware of the drug's devastating consequences, Rounsaville still marvels at the cocaine producers' marketing savvy. "Cocaine is a commodity, like everything else, and there's a worldwide glut," he says. "They had to come up with something to rekindle the interest of its largest market—the U.S."

Others attribute far less benign motives to the drug's developers. "The crack epidemic seems to be more than just an accident," says Rev. Herbert Daughtry of Brooklyn, president of African Peoples Christian Organization and the founder of an anti-crack group in his home borough.

"Among other things, crack is being used by some people as a deterrent to our liberation efforts. Much like the British did in China during the Boxer Rebellion," Daughtry is one of many African-American leaders who discern a conspiratorial hand behind the spread of crack (see accompanying story). "However," he adds, "crack would find no ready market if we as a people had not been robbed of our sense of personhood."

And that's what we have to work on regaining."

There have been a few successful attempts to stem the tide of crack in some communities, but by and large it's been a losing proposition. Demand for the drug is too great, the supply too large and the profits too substantial. The virulent growth of the crack trade has overwhelmed traditional law enforcement tactics, and police in many cities can only mount holding actions with periodic sweeps of neighborhoods known to host crack dealers.

Crack cures? Scientists researching crack's biochemical nature are seeking therapeutic chemicals to help ease abusers away from their fierce addiction to the substance. According to Rounsaville, they've had some minor successes with certain antidepressant drugs. "Cocaine addiction manifests itself in psychiatric symptoms, like depression, rather than the physical symptoms of heroin addiction," he says.

"Our experience is that we can help people stay away from crack if we can help them develop a stronger sense of self-esteem," says John Pierce, media coordinator for Day Top Village in New York City and a former crack addict. "Once you get hooked, your entire life revolves around trying to recapture the feeling of euphoria you had when you first hit your first blast. Crack addicts say they're 'on a mission.'" Pierce says he was "on a mission" for more than two years before bottoming out. "I stopped because I told myself I had to."

Although Pierce acknowledges the drug's powerful physiological effects, he believes the true cause of addiction is a lack of self-worth. "To me it's a simple equation," Pierce says. "Crack addiction is most frequent in the communities where people feel less good about themselves."

Pierce's prescription makes sense and is concordant with the views of many others in the field of drug rehabilitation. But as yet another debilitating substance cuts a swatch through the African-American community, leaving battered lives and squandered potential in its wake, it's not clear if anyone is listening. □

Controversial black leader battles against crack

Sonny Carson is president of a group called Black Men's Movement Against Crack, a Brooklyn-based group devoted to strong-arming the crack epidemic out of the African-American community. Carson is a veteran of the black movement whose transformation from gang leader to community organizer was depicted in the cult film *The Education of Sonny Carson*. He is outspoken, some say intentionally outrageous, and he often comes down on the side of unabashed violence.

"Crack is the most vicious weapon ever mounted against us," Carson explains. "It's part of a genocidal war and we must be warlike in fighting it. Our organization, Black Men's Movement Against Crack, has one motto: death to all crack dealers. And believe me, brother, we're dead serious."

Carson says he was pushed on the warpath by the murder of his mother-in-law by a crack dealer in 1985, and he's decided to put his life on the line to end what he sees as a blatant attempt to kill the spirit of the black community. "Who

do you think arranged for all of this crack to get into the black community?" he asks. "Who arranged for those Colombian planes to land in Miami via Panama? You know who I'm talking about. Bush and Oliver North and the rest of them. Why are we so afraid to speak the truth? They want us dead, and all we're doing is sitting around and watching our communities die while their agents peddle death right under our noses."

Carson says that when he first started the anti-crack group the response was large, but support has subsequently dwindled. Several observers attribute that to Carson's intemperate tendencies. He says it's because most black males have "forgotten how to act like men. We've been relegated to the bottom of the heap for so long we've forgotten what it means to take responsibility for our communities. We've ceded them to our enemies. I'm going to fight the crack plague until my last breath is gone."

—S.M.

By Joel Bleifuss

They think it can, they think it can...

Assuming Congress gives the go-ahead, the Pentagon will deploy its first mobile MX missile train in 1991. Air Force Col. Michael R. Boldrick, writing in the October 1988 *Trains* magazine, describes how such a system will work. The following is a condensed version of his article. "During times of grave national crisis the Strategic Air Command's four-star commander-in-chief will grab the fabled red telephone and bark out an order dispatching 25 trainloads of MXs from fortified bunkers on Air Force bases onto the nation's railroads and out of harm's way. Military personnel who are qualified to operate the missile train are on board the locomotive, but railroad employees are carried as pilots. Randomly spaced gunports can be opened to direct small-arms fire at any hostile force threatening the train. The same tightly woven silvery flash curtains that hang in B-52 bomber cockpits can be drawn tight, shielding the crew from the eye-searing fireballs of nuclear conflict. The first car is the security car. A senior non-commissioned officer mans a console, scanning video displays of the outside world, periodically shifting his attention to radar scopes scanning for would-be intruders. Train noise is muted by lead panels shielding the crew from radiation. In the small kitchen, six members of the security strike team warm old-fashioned K rations (now called MRE, for Meals Ready to Eat). Underneath, a holding tank ensures environmental laws are obeyed, even on a war train. Next to the galley, a three-person maintenance team whiles away the hours playing cards in the compact dining area. Side arms, holstered cowboy-style on each crew member's hip, underscore the gravity of missile duty. In the second car, which masquerades as a [freight car] a 71-foot-long 190,000-pound MX missile, with its aluminum-tipped titanium shroud pointing toward the security car, lies prone, tightly packed in its launch canister. Only by secret message, authorized by the president, can this capability be unleashed. When ordered, retaliation is swift. With what sounds like a shotgun blast, followed by a loud whoosh, the missile is ejected from the canister. Above the train the MX emerges from the white vapor, slows, and—for a breathtaking moment—hangs like a spent round. Suddenly, an orange flame shoots downward from the nozzle, and with a thundering roar the missile accelerates, arcing downrange toward the target." He goes on to describe the remaining five cars.

Democracy's price: Boldrick explains that rust and peeling paint will be applied to these missile trains that could one day ply the nation's 150,000 miles of rail. He writes: "The trains are designed to look as much as possible like everyday freight trains for three reasons. First, protection from saboteurs. The Soviets have highly trained and effective teams to infiltrate enemy territory. Some probably are already present as 'deep' agents masquerading as Americans in various walks of life until activated for operation... Second, protection from anti-war activists... Third, protection from satellite detection... Finally, are railfans a problem? Knowledgeable consultants have apprised the Air Force of the depth and breadth of the hobby, but it appears that military planners don't consider it a major problem. There is a threat from what the Air Force calls HUMINT, or human intelligence, and in the case of MX it could prove troublesome if a nationwide band of railfans was willing to sell information to the Soviets. But that might be the price of a democracy. We must assume railfans are patriotic."

Waste not, want not

People who live near the Amelia, La., plant of the waste-recycling firm Marine Shale Processors have long claimed that toxic emissions and leaks from the site are behind a rare form of childhood cancer that has afflicted several area children. So many residents were pleased when Louisiana's state government took action against Marine Shale late last month. Steven Watsky—who filed an extensive report on Marine Shale in the Oct. 5, 1988, edition of *In These Times*—reports that the state has fined the firm \$1.75 million. The far-ranging penalty assessment and compliance order, issued by the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), charges Marine Shale accepted hazardous waste that the firm knew had no recyclable value—a violation of its permit as a recycler of the toxic substances. The company also was ordered to remove all storage tanks and containers holding hazardous



A sign reading "Land, Justice, Liberty" marks the entrance to the land occupied in Tierra Amarilla.

Mexican-American War still simmers in New Mexico

TIERRA AMARILLA, N.M.—A Mexican flag—a reminder of roots and reasons—flaps in the winter breeze. The roofs of barbed-wired bunkers peek out from under the snow. A poster of Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, reading *Tierra O Muerte* (land or death), hangs on a tree near a newly constructed log cabin. "The struggle of liberation is based on land," says Pedro Arechuleta, a former construction worker who quit his job, picked up a gun and joined his armed *compañeros* in one of the most publicized land-grant disputes in New Mexico history.

Arechuleta and 14 other men have formed a council around the dispute and have been camping out in shifts for over nine months on a 500-acre tract of land they claim is theirs by virtue of a century-old land grant. The government says the land belongs to Vista del Brazos, an Arizona partnership that has yet to disclose what exactly it plans to do with the land.

The Tierra Amarilla land dispute has come to symbolize a community struggling to retain a few acres of land they and their families have lived on for over a century. Like so many small northern New Mexican communities, Tierra Amarilla (Yellow Land) has been targeted by developers envisioning dollars generated by vacationing yuppies and alternative-lifestyle-seeking New-Age families. Easy allusions to John Nichols' *Milagro Beanfield War* aside, in this community, blueprints for condos and ski lodges cast a shadow over small adobe homes and farms, wooden shacks, trailers, herds of sheep and roving geese.

The roots of the battle go back to 1832, when the Mexican government conveyed the 60,000-acre Tierra Amarilla Land Grant to settlers in the area. Sixteen years later, the historic treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

ended the Mexican-American War and ceded the land to the U.S. on the condition that existing land claims would be respected.

According to Malcom Ebright, author of *The Tierra Amarilla Land Grant: A History of Chicanery*, Congress in 1860 ruled that the land covered in the grant was not communal property, but was owned by one man, Manuel Martinez, the original petitioner for the grant. Ebright says the Martinez family began granting deeds to families settling the land in 1861. Many Tierra Amarilla residents still hold the original copies of those deeds. But in 1874, the Martinezes also began selling interests in the grant to the U.S. attorney for New Mexico, Thomas Catron. Catron later secured the U.S. government land



patent to the grant and in the 1880's succeeded in transferring to himself title to almost all of the land. Since then, state and federal judges, in a series of court actions, have ruled the older deeds invalid.

Amador Flores, a Tierra Amarilla rancher and the first to protest the ownership claims of Vista del Brazos, had written himself and another man a deed to the land in 1968 based on an old family deed and his Mexican descent. In the early '80s he asserted his claim following the purchase of 1,900 acres of the original land grant by Vista del Brazos.

In a hearing last summer, a Santa Fe judge ruled that Flores had no right to occupy the tract. Flores—who was not present at the hearing and claims he was never informed it would take place—was later arrested and jailed after he publicly burned the judge's injunction ordering him off the land on which he and his family have lived for 21 years.

Flores was released from jail on the condition that he and those under his control abide by a permanent injunction that ordered them off of the land. He agreed to the stipulation and has not set foot on the land since his release. But his father, Arechuleta and several others have remained, prepared to pick up their semiautomatic deer-hunting rifles in the event of a shootout with the police.

"The Constitution says we have the right to bear arms," says Arechuleta. "We have rights to protect our lives and our community. We're willing to go as far as we have to go." Adds Daniel Aguilar, another member of the council, "We took an armed position because history tells us the courts will never act in our favor. If we came in here peacefully, we would have been on the road in half an hour."

Family and community members bring food and supplies to the men, and financial and moral backing comes from people across the U.S. and throughout Central America. "We took this position as a struggle of our people for the survival of our community," says Arechuleta. Some community members consider the council's actions extreme. But council member Aguilar believes those opposed to the armed defense have financial interests in the development of the land. "The land struggle is the worst struggle there is," he says. "It divides brothers."

All of the members of the council say they are willing to negotiate with the developers. "We fly the Mexican flag because we are Mexicans—we are not Chicano or Hispano—we are not Spanish," says Arechuleta.

He would like to see the land re-

served for Mexican descendants only, and compensation provided to those "outsiders" who innocently purchased parcels of the land grant.

Crowd-control technology: where there's a will, there's a way

JERUSALEM—Israel's pressure against the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories—which was heightened with news of plans for U.S.-PLO talks—now includes the frequent firing of metal marbles at the heads or upper bodies of demonstrators.

This new anti-personnel device is a round steel slug, one-half inch thick and covered with a thin sheet of hard rubber. The Israeli government claims that the new bullets were introduced to cut down on shooting deaths. The bullets are propelled in clusters from metal canisters affixed to rifles. In a split second 20 of these missiles can be fired into a crowd. The bullets are also sprayed from a large cannonlike device that otherwise would shoot gravel. But according to doctors and witnesses, most of the initial victims were shot at fairly close range—15 to 30 yards, perhaps closer. Military regulations state

Arechuleta would ultimately like to set up a socialist community on the land. "People who are politically advanced want socialist com-

these new bullets must be fired from 75 yards or more.

In the early stages of the *intifada* hospital records showed that a number of demonstrators and bystanders were killed or seriously injured by live ammunition fired from the M-16 or Galil (modified Soviet AK-47) rifles. At the same time it was widely reported that the Israeli Defense Forces were quelling demonstrations with "rubber" bullets—cylindrically shaped steel slugs surrounded by rubber.

At close range, the new round plastic slug leaves the M-16 with the velocity of a "live" bullet. The bullet is described by doctors as a steel sphere surrounded by a "baked" substance. The slug can pass through the entire body and can easily penetrate the skull.

This amalgam of plastic and metal shows up well on the X-ray machines at East Jerusalem's Makassad Hospital where the brain-dead protesters are brought to await their official death in the overcrowded intensive care unit. One of those waiting last month at Makassad was 14-year-old Rana Marsi, who was hit at close range by one of the new rubber bul-

lunities, like our ancestors had. This is the land that belongs to the people, and the people have a right to own the land." —Kira Jones

lets on January 7. Her family said she was trying to pull a cousin away from a soldier when she was struck. Her death days later sparked a demonstration in her hometown of Nablus that resulted in more bloodshed.

According to doctors at the hospital, Marsi was one of about six people fatally injured by the so-called "plastic" marbles during the period following the U.S. decision to meet with the PLO.

Marwan Mughari, 17, was dying in the same room, while his mother slumped against the wall outside. According to witnesses, Marwan was hit from about 15 yards by a marble-shaped bullet during the first week of January at Burij Camp in Gaza. A cousin said the victim was emerging from an alley, eating a sandwich when hit. Another cousin had died 40 days earlier, the victim of a older, prototypical rubber bullet.

One doctor said that the new bullets are almost impossible to surgically remove from a brain. Instead of lodging in the brain, the round steel marble "rolls back and forth," its mass being greater than the surrounding soft brain tissue.

—Michael Emery

Prague Spring fever continues in Czechoslovakia

Two decades ago this year Alexander Dubcek resigned as leader of Czechoslovakia's Communist Party after his liberalization plans for the East Bloc country were brought to an end by a Soviet invasion. Now Dubcek is re-emerging on the political scene and demonstrations similar to those in the 1968 "Prague Spring" liberalization movement are causing trouble for Czech authorities.

Prague police used water cannons, dogs, riot sticks and tear gas to break up demonstrations that began peacefully in Prague's Wenceslas Square on January 15. Ironically, on that same day in Vienna, Czech Foreign Minister Jaromir Johanes signed a human rights agreement with 34 other foreign ministers from the Warsaw Pact, NATO and 12 other European countries as a followup to the 1975 Helsinki accord.

This latest round of protests began with a memorial demonstration to mark the 20th anniversary of the death of Jan Palach, a student who immolated himself in objection to the 1968 Soviet invasion. By the time the police had gained control over the situation last week, 800 people had been arrested—and at least 13 of them face sentences of up to three years.

These demonstrations are the latest in a series that have coincided with the commemoration of the Prague Spring. In August, 10,000

people marched through Prague. In September police attacked a crowd of 300 with billy clubs. In October police detained more than 50 people when Charter 77 and other independent political groups celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Czechoslovak republic. Ten protesters are facing up to 10 years in jail for their participation in those protests. Prison conditions in Czechoslovakia are notoriously poor. At least one political prisoner has recently died in custody and numerous others are reported to be sick and dying.

Last November former Czech Communist Party leader Dubcek spoke out in Bologna, Italy, against the current government and defended his own short-lived attempts at reform. His criticisms, contained in the written copy of his speech, were stronger than those he has offered in the few interviews he has given (see *In These Times*, Aug. 31, 1988).

Copies of Dubcek's speech, delivered when he accepted an honorary degree in political science from the University of Bologna, were handed out to journalists in advance. But Dubcek cut almost all political references when he read the speech aloud in Slovak in fear that he would not be allowed to return to Czechoslovakia.

His written speech criticized the official interpretation of Czech history and called for a full acknowledgment of the "trauma that still weighs on our society." Dubcek characterized the past 20 years in his country as a time of "worsening economic stagnation, sterility and incalculable moral losses." After praising the hu-

manist figures of the Italian Renaissance, Dubcek spoke enthusiastically of his own reforms. Had it not been for the Soviet intervention, he said, "our efforts would have been crowned with success."

His visit to Italy was the first time he had been allowed out of the country since 1969. But this gesture of *glasnost* on the part of Czech authorities masked the worst crackdown on independent politics in a decade.

On November 10 a group of intellectuals and human rights activists announced the formation of a Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee, a group affiliated with the Vienna-based International Federation for Human Rights. The committee said it would monitor the Czech government's compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki accords. Czech authorities attempted to block the group's inception by arresting some 20 dissidents the day the committee's formation was scheduled to be announced.

The 20th anniversary actions are an attempt to reverse the moral losses of which Dubcek spoke. As are the more than 50 *samizdat*—self-published—journals now circulating in Czechoslovakia. In addition to the already established Charter 77 and the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS), numerous dissident groups such as Democratic Initiative and the Polish-Czech solidarity group, have sprung up in the past year. In spite of arrests, beatings, imprisonment and incessant police harassment, Czech dissidents persevere.

—Robert Worth

waste because it has no permit to store toxic substances on site. Until the company receives authorization to store waste on site, it will be able to accept only substances that can be immediately incinerated. Marine Shale claims it "recycles" hazardous waste by incinerating the toxic substances to make a product called aggregate—a fill material company literature touts is "so safe that it surpasses drinking water standards." Not so, according to the DEQ, which found that some of the "benign" aggregate is still hazardous after being passed through the company's rotary kiln process. The compliance order forces Marine Shale to safely dispose of the "hot" aggregate. The biggest blow to the company is the determination that some of the substances they accept have no value as a recyclable material. The ruling, which forces Marine Shale to stop accepting certain wastes, will cut into the company's profits—estimated at \$40 million last year. The penalties and compliance order will force Marine Shale to revamp many of its practices, or face closure by the state. Marine Shale was also slapped with a \$2.8 million fine in October for numerous water-quality violations, but the company appealed that assessment and likely will appeal this latest levy.



Karen Kubby

Iowa City elects socialist potter

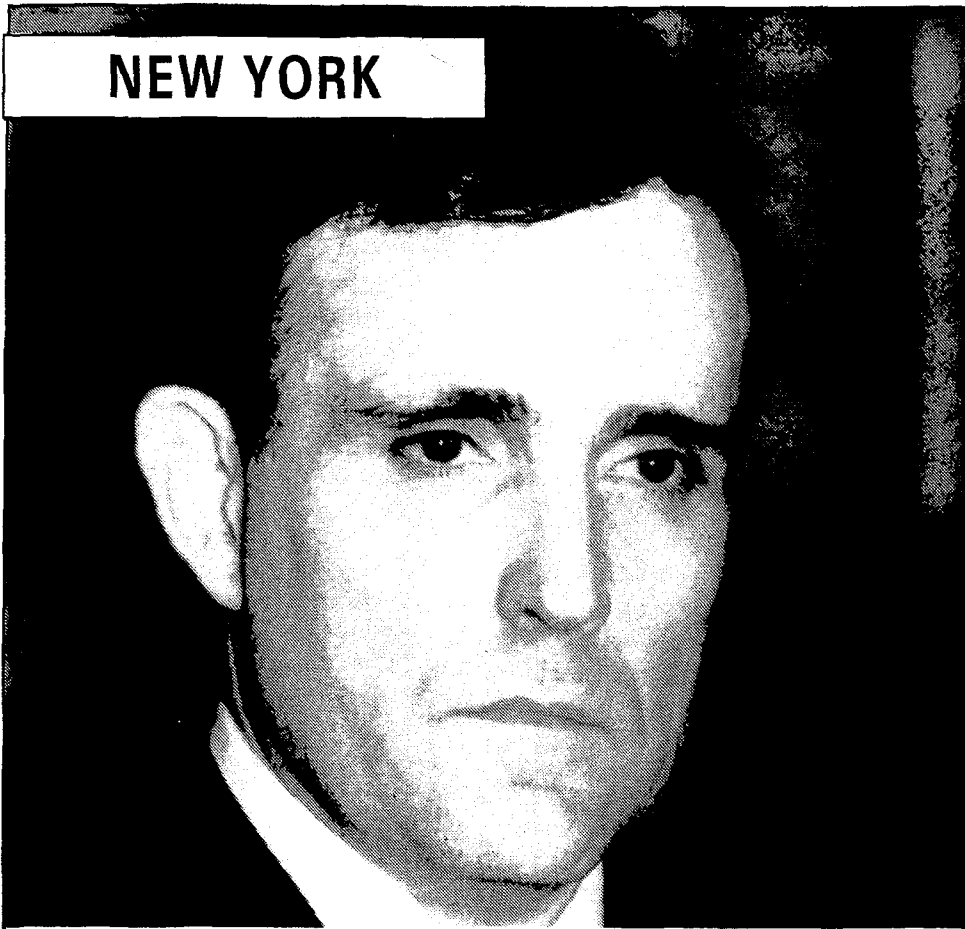
On January 10 Iowa City voters elected Karen Kubby to an at-large seat on their city council. During the campaign, Kubby, 28, a self-employed artisan was attacked as a "pot maker" and a "democratic socialist." She told *In These Times* she did not run on the slogan: "A pot for every chicken." Kubby, a vegetarian, celebrated her victory with a party where the dip was made from soybean products. It was Kubby's third try for city council. Active in Iowa City politics for eight years, she was backed by a diverse coalition that included all the local unions, lesbians and gays, environmentalists, Democratic Party leaders, the local Democratic Socialists of America chapter and the Socialist Party. A strong believer in third-party politics, Kubby is a member of the Socialist Party's national committee, the treasurer of the thriving Iowa Socialist Party and the coordinator of the local party. Kubby polled 108 votes more than Mary Jo Streb, a real estate developer who had to withdraw from a 1987 city council race because of a conflict of interest with her husband's city-contracted construction company. Streb stressed two issues, her opponent's ideology and the "need to make our business climate such that new businesses will want to come here." Kubby, who refused to respond to the redbaiting, told voters she would work to get the public library to stay open seven days a week, to implement a solid-waste disposal system that emphasizes recycling and to maintain city services, even if that means raising taxes. Both candidates opposed further regulation of keg parties at the University of Iowa. Kubby gives credit to the 130 campaign volunteers who made her election possible. She says they formed a real rainbow of backgrounds and abilities—her campaign manager was deaf, one volunteer was mildly retarded. In order to keep the 130 volunteers active, Kubby's campaign organization is sponsoring a "first annual town meeting potluck"—a dining experience to which city officials and her fellow council members are also invited.

By Daniel Lazare

NEW YORK

Could anyone be worse than Koch? Try Giuliani

NEW YORK



U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani: the object of the New York media's fatal attraction.

IF U.S. ATTORNEY RUDOLPH GIULIANI TOPPLES ED Koch and becomes mayor this year, as many people believe he might, it will be in no small measure due to his network of supporters in the press.

His well-placed admirers include Jonathan Z. Larson, the new editor of the *Village Voice*, who profiled him lengthily and glowingly in the pages of *Manhattan Inc.*; *Serpico* author Peter Maas, who compared him to Thomas E. Dewey in the pages of *New York* magazine; *Newsday* columnist Jimmy Breslin, who says he is the answer to "Koch, corruption and crack" and adds that his election is all but assured; and muckrakers Jack Newfield of the *Daily News* and Wayne Barrett of the *Village Voice*, who celebrate his war on municipal corruption in their new book, *City for Sale: Ed Koch and the Betrayal of New York*.

Essentially, they admire Giuliani because he's tough and effective and has not only put a lot of Wall Street big shots behind bars but has also made a dent in the political machine supporting Ed Koch. "I tend to judge people by their enemies," wrote Jack Newfield in the *Daily News*, "and Giuliani has all the right enemies. Wall Street takeover artists curse his name. Ed Meese is uncomfortable being in the same room with him. Wise-guys told the owner of my favorite restaurant on Mulberry Street to take Giuliani's picture off the wall. [Sen.] Al D'Amato [R-NY] is trying to get the Republican endorsement for Koch, to block Giuliani."

Yet Giuliani is not merely tough, but gives new meaning to the word ruthless. Besides Mafia dons and inside traders, people with cause to dislike him include the thousands of Haitian boat people he helped herd into concentration camps in South Florida in 1981-82 as associate attorney general; civil libertarians dismayed by his strong-arm use of federal racketeering statutes; and trade unionists alarmed by his bid to place the entire 1.7 million-member Teamsters union under direct federal control. He's to the right of Koch on issues such as abortion (generally opposed, he said in a 1987 interview in *New York* magazine) and civil liberties (he supported the Supreme Court nomination of Robert Bork). He backs contra aid and, as a key architect of the Reagan administration's misguided anti-drug policies, bears major responsibility for the epidemic of drugs and crime now raging through the cities.

Consequently, in rallying around Giuliani, the anti-Koch forces may actually be opening the door to something worse—a hardened, conservative Republican operative who, after years of preparation, is at least poised to take over a city whose very name is synonymous with liberalism. Viewed conspiratorially, Giuliani's war against Democratic bosses like Stanley Friedman of the Bronx and Meade Esposito of Brooklyn has amounted to a destabilization campaign aimed at giving a corrupt, internally weakened Democratic machine a final push. As a result, Giuliani may soon be in a position to declare victory amid the rubble.

On the record: A review of the putative mayoral candidate's career shows that he is nowhere near as honest and pure as his cheerleaders in the press seem to believe. The following are a few highlights:

- As the Justice Department's No. 3 official

from 1981 to 1983, Giuliani had control over the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration and almost 100 local U.S. attorneys, a position of power that gave him nearly a free hand in implementing the new administration's philosophy of crime control. The battle against drugs was upgraded to the level of a moral crusade, while the war on white-collar crime, a major concern of the Carter administration, was de-emphasized. Foreign policy goals—collaboration with criminal regimes in Haiti, Pakistan, etc.—received new priority.

One of Giuliani's first acts was to scuttle the criminal prosecution of four officials of the McDonnell Douglas aircraft corporation who were accused of bribing members of the Pakistani government to facilitate the sale of DC-10 aircraft. The prosecution, begun under Carter, infuriated Republicans who saw nothing wrong with greasing Third World palms, and Giuliani was the man they chose to act. In early 1981 he met privately with a McDonnell Douglas official without informing the government prosecutors in charge of the case—an extraordinary breach of professional decorum. When the prosecutors protested what to all appearances was a fix, Giuliani, according to James B. Stewart's 1987 study, "The Prosecutors," called them into his office and flew into a rage.

"As far as I'm concerned, we were watching a madman," one of them recounted. "He ranted and raved for a full 20 minutes. He just went nuts." Defending himself against charges of unethical behavior, Giuliani later told the *Washington Post* that he had not known of the McDonnell Douglas indictments when he met with John Sant, the firm's general counsel. This is hard to believe since the indictments had been big news for

months and the subject of repeated debate in Congress.

A few months later Giuliani dropped the charges against the four officials, although the company itself was required to pay fines and penalties totaling \$1.25 million. Among other things, according to Stewart, John Sant pointed out in his meeting with Giuliani that the prosecution would disrupt U.S.-Pakistani relations at a time when the Reagan administration needed Pakistan's cooperation most in arming the Afghan guerrillas. Why allow something as petty as \$2 million in bribes to come between partners in the global anti-communist crusade?

- After disposing of McDonnell Douglas, Giuliani served as the administration's point man in dealing with an influx of refugees in southern Florida from Jean-Claude Duvalier's Haiti. The administration's response was to bottle up 2,100 boat people into hastily constructed detention centers for a year or more until it figured out a way to send them packing. In April 1982 Giuliani testified in federal court that political repression "simply does not exist now" in Haiti and that Baby Doc had personally assured him two weeks earlier that refugees had nothing to fear if they returned home.

- In 1982 Giuliani pioneered the use of AWAC's against airborne drug smugglers and succeeded in wresting control of the war on drugs from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and placing it in the hands of the FBI. Marijuana imports declined, but the new emphasis on border interdiction merely persuaded importers to switch to more lucrative and concealable drugs like cocaine. Drug prices plummeted, and inner-city youths were soon persuaded to give up reefer in favor of the far more intense pleasures of crack.

- Shortly after arriving in New York in mid-1983, Giuliani announced an FBI-DEA sweep of Manhattan's drug-infested Lower East Side. It was the first time the feds had stooped to the level of the ordinary street peddler, and politicians and the press were impressed. Not so the peddlers themselves, however: they laid low for a few days before returning to the streets in full force.

- In 1986 Giuliani and Sen. D'Amato donned shades and their grubbier weekend clothes and journeyed up to Washington Heights, another prime crack bazaar, to demonstrate how easy it was to purchase drugs. This time the absurdity was apparent even to the press. If the stunt proved anything, it was that there was nothing that "Sen. Sleazeball," as the *New Republic* once called him, and his erstwhile sidekick wouldn't stoop to in pursuit of a headline. (The two men have since had a falling out.)

- While in Washington, Giuliani helped fashion the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute into the prosecutorial nuclear weapon that it is today. Passed in 1970, RICO lay fallow for more than a decade until he and others decided to try to tap its vast hidden potential. They succeeded beyond all expectations. Since RICO requires a pattern of only two "predicate crimes" over a 10-year period, Giuliani and others were able to bring racketeering against targets as diverse as Drexel Burnham Lambert, Wall Street's junk-bond kings, and the Teamsters.

RICO terrifies civil libertarians because its remedies—forfeiture of assets, federal receivership, even dissolution of the company or union—are all out of proportion to the individual crimes. It multiplies the power of prosecutors like Giuliani. Because a judge can permit prosecutors to seize assets prior to trial (to prevent the defendants from liquidating them or spiriting them away to safe havens), it permits them to put people out of business before they have a chance to defend themselves in court. Thus a New Jersey-based investment firm, Princeton/Newport Partners, was forced to fold last year after Giuliani's office charged it with RICO violations and obtained a court order freezing its assets in lieu of a \$24 million bond. When Giuliani employed the same tactics last fall against Drexel Burnham, some of the firm's top officers wanted to fight. But they were overruled by others who recognized that RICO had decisively shifted the balance of power to the government side.

- Although federal prosecutors in New Jersey pioneered the use of RICO against Teamsters Local 560, Giuliani, characteristically, has escalated the war by proposing a federal takeover of the Teamsters. This would cripple one of the largest unions in America, destroying it, Vietnam-style, in the name of saving it. As groups like Americans Against Government Control of Unions (a creation of the United Food and Commercial Workers and other labor organizations) have pointed out, this would not return control to the members, but merely would replace one form of outside control (the Mob) with another (the even bigger mob in Washington). Leaving it to the big-business Reagan-Bush team to clean up the Teamsters is like placing Ed Meese in charge of the American Bar Association's committee on legal ethics.

- As U.S. attorney, Giuliani has also per-

Continued on page 10

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

DURING LAST YEAR'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION campaign George Bush and Michael Dukakis agreed that reducing the budget deficit was the nation's most pressing economic problem. In Bush's inaugural address he promised to balance the budget while not even mentioning other economic problems.

But there is a growing consensus in Congress and among policy-makers that reducing the trade deficit is more important than reducing the budget deficit. At congressional nomination hearings, discussion invariably turned away from spending and taxes toward the Japanese advantage in high-definition television and semiconductor technology. "I hope you understand the criticality of this issue," Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) told Robert Mosbacher, Bush's first choice for secretary of commerce.

The U.S. trade problem was highlighted in December by a slew of new statistical studies. According to Commerce Department figures, the trade deficit, which had recently declined during September and October, rose sharply in November, with exports falling 2.3 percent and imports rising 2.5 percent. This drop suggested that the U.S. is no longer reaping the rewards of a decline in the dollar's value and that further improvements in the nation's trade balance will require more extraordinary measures.

Three studies revealed the decline of the U.S. electronics industry. According to the American Electronics Association, the U.S. share in the world market dropped from 50.4 percent in 1984 to 39.7 percent in 1987, while both the Japanese and Western European share of world trade increased. A European study found that from 1984 to 1988, the U.S. share of the world market dropped from 47 to 37 percent. And according to Dataquest, a San Jose, Calif., consulting firm, the U.S. share dropped from 59 to 37 percent in the last year alone.

These figures demonstrate that even in the midst of the Reagan recovery and the dollar devaluation, the U.S. was slipping behind in the most critical industry of the age. Into the next century, advances in electronics will undergird advances in every other kind of production, even agriculture. Without a viable electronics industry the U.S. will not only be at the mercy of other countries, its workers will also be consigned to the lower-paying, less productive jobs in the international division of labor.

The U.S. is behind Japan in the two newest areas of electronic innovation—superconductors and high-definition television (HDTV). Superconductors, which allow virtually frictionless transmission of electricity, will eventually make possible batteries that never lose power, ultrahigh-speed trains that float above magnetized rails and a new generation of supercomputers. HDTV will revolutionize not only commercial television (making possible sharply focused 50-inch screens) but will have far-reaching military and industrial uses.

The U.S. and Japan discovered superconductors at about the same time, but the U.S. is still at the laboratory stage while the Japanese are beginning to build motors with superconductors. With only one remaining TV manufacturer, Zenith, the U.S. lags far behind both the Japanese and Western Europeans in the commercial development of HDTV.

Frodded by Assistant Commerce Secretary for Technology Bruce Merrifield, and by a few Congressmen like Reps. Edward Mar-

key (D-MA) and Don Ritter (R-PA), Congress has been trying for four years to develop a strategy for preserving the American electronics industry. Congress and the industry now appear ready to back a plan that defies the axioms of free-market economics.

Consortiums and commissions: Merrifield and his congressional allies have been pushing a strategy modeled on the Japanese. They want American businesses and universities to form consortiums—financed at least in part by government—that would research and develop new electronics products. In 1984 Congress passed the National Cooperative Research Act, which waives anti-trust legislation for such ventures. Since then 115 consortiums involving more than 1,000 companies have registered with the government. The most important of these is Sematech, started two years ago in Austin, Texas, by 14 semiconductor firms and 50 percent financed by government funds. Sematech is developing a prototype manufacturing process for the next generation of computer chips.

In the 1987 trade bill, Congress established a national advisory committee on semiconductors to oversee the industry. Last March President Ronald Reagan appointed an advisory committee on superconductors. The latter panel, composed of seven industry officials and scientists, recommended on January 3 that the government set up six consortiums to spur superconductor development. Without this kind of cooperation between the government and industry, the advisers reported, American firms were "unlikely to survive in what we think will be a long-distance race."

The American Electronics Association (AEA), formerly a bulwark of free-market economics, has become the leading proponent of government planning. The AEA is organizing a consortium of 16 firms to develop HDTV. Commerce's Merrifield wants the HDTV consortium not only to create a prototype but to begin production. And, with the support of Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, he is proposing a further revision in anti-trust laws that will allow these private-public consortiums to sell their wares on the market.

Commerce vs. Defense: In the past, the only way to justify government economic planning was in the name of national security. Thus the Defense Department, rather than

Commerce, funds Sematech. In December the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) announced that it would put \$30 million into developing HDTV. DARPA spokeswoman Jan Bodanyi justified the expenditure on military grounds. "If there was a commercially advanced display industry we could fulfill our needs at a lower cost," Bodanyi said.

Both Democrats and Republicans are recognizing that the threat to American prosperity is a sufficient justification for government

ECONOMY

intervention. At Mosbacher's confirmation hearings he concurred with the recommendation of Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-SC) that the Commerce Department assume leadership in funding the new consortiums. Industry officials, fearful that Pentagon funding will be diverted eventually into specialized military applications, also want Commerce in and Defense out.

The main opposition to economic planning is coming from diehard conservatives like George Gilder, from medium-size firms that still believe they can make it better on their own, and from the Japan lobby in the U.S. Last month at the industry trade show in Las Vegas, the Electronic Industries Association (EIA), funded by Sony and other Japanese firms, attacked the proposal for a government-funded HDTV consortium. "An awful lot of mythology

The final rite of Reaganomics

Democrats in Congress are ignoring Ronald Reagan's leftover budget for fiscal 1990. Reagan's proposal will nevertheless provide a point of departure for Bush. By restoring social programs that Reagan wanted to eliminate and reducing Reagan's proposed 2 percent increase in military spending, Bush can make himself appear moderate while still adhering to the budget's conservative strategy.

Reagan's budget reflects his administration's priorities. The budget increases spending on the Strategic Defense Initiative 47 percent for 1990. Weapons programs are not canceled but stretched out. Multinationals and oil producers are given a tax break. Medicare premiums are increased and payments to hospitals are

reduced. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program is cut. Funding for Trade Adjustment Assistance is canceled along with 25 education programs.

The Reagan budget makes one concession to the country's industrial woes—a 14 percent increase in funding for the National Science Foundation—but it eliminates community and regional development grants and cuts infrastructure funding. Reagan's budget also eliminates any subsidies for Amtrak—at a time when Western Europe is financing a new high-speed rail system that will reduce pollution and energy costs as well as provide rapid and practical mass transportation.

—J.B.J.



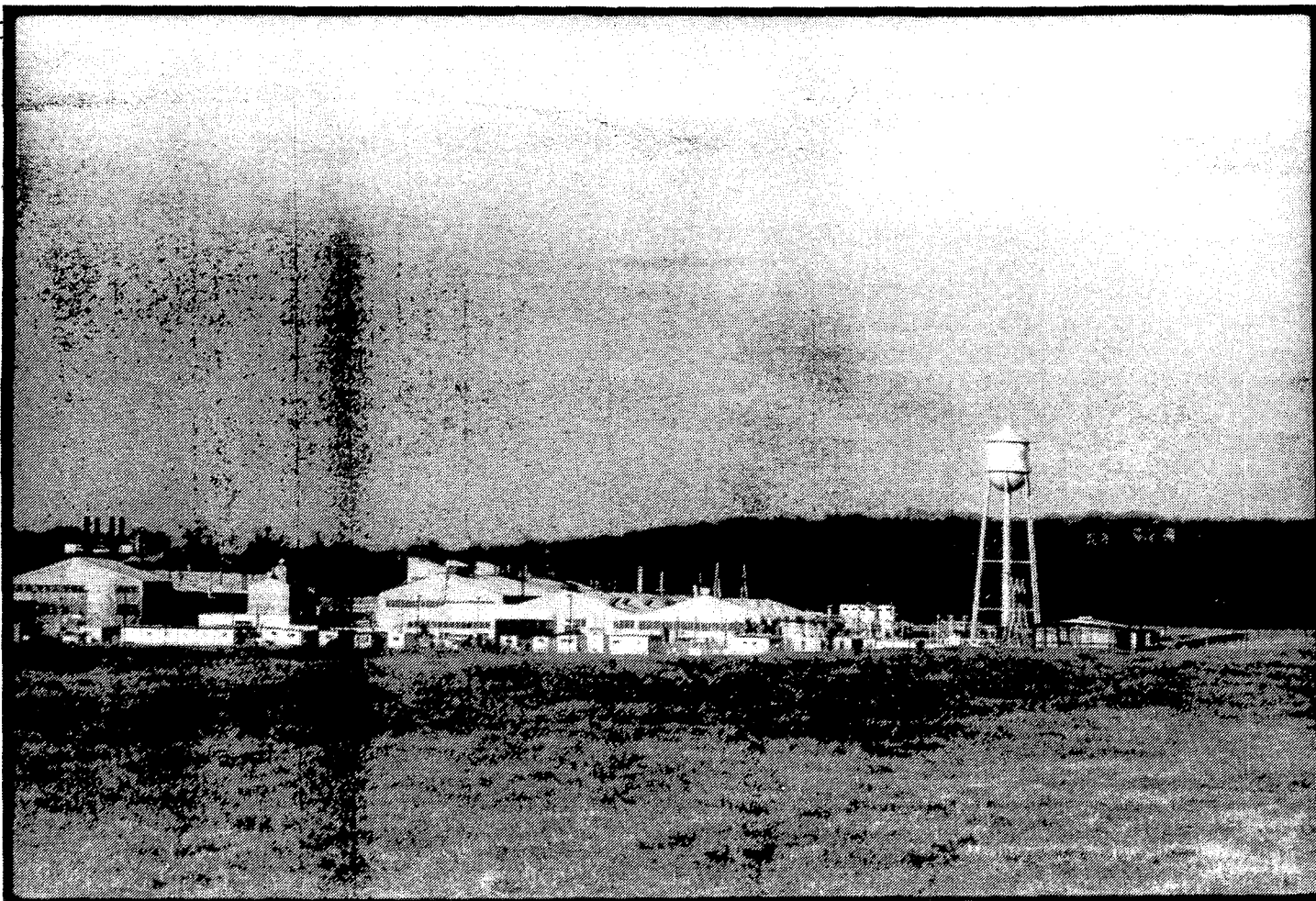
The black and white of trade deficit's red ink

developed around HDTV, EIA Vice President Thomas Friel said. "I would prefer to spend my tax money on the home care, education, and other issues." Evidently the Japanese are now worried about our home care.

Trade and the budget: Some policy-makers link the budget deficit to the trade deficit. At the hearings, Richard Damiani, Eush's nominee for director of the Office of Management and Budget, argued that by lowering the rate of saving, budget deficits depress business investment and raise consumption of imports. Former Carter adviser Charles Schultze argues that the composition of the deficit imperils American industry. Schultze would be far less worried if the deficit were created by new spending on education and infrastructure—which can contribute to higher industrial productivity—rather than by increased welfare and military spending.

Schultze's reasoning was echoed by Sen. Bennett Johnston (D-LA), a member of the Senate Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations. In a *New York Times* op-ed piece Johnston argued that to counter the deficit and to protect the nation's "commercial competitiveness," the U.S. needed to get its allies to share more of the defense burden so that it could shift expenditures from military to civilian research and development. Johnston is a moderate Democrat who previously backed military spending increases. His advocacy of burden-sharing shows the degree to which the entire Congress is being brought around by the specter of industrial decline.

Eush, however, may be among the last to see the light. This will not be because he is stupid or unusually conservative, but because he is locked into the conventional logic of American politics—one that accords the budget deficit rather than the trade deficit the highest place of economic concern. □



Fernald's dog of a "feed" plant wears a checkerboard disguise on its tower.

Ohioans are learning to hate the bomb

By David Beach

FERNALD, OHIO

VIGILS ARE REGULAR SATURDAY AFTERNOON events outside the main gate of the Department of Energy's Fernald uranium processing plant. Peace activists from Cincinnati stand with signs along the shoulders of a two-lane country road and call for the closing of the 1,050-acre facility, which since 1952 has helped refine and fabricate the uranium fuel that government nuclear reactors use to make plutonium for nuclear weapons (see *In These Times*, Nov. 9, 1988).

A frequent participant in the demonstrations is a 71-year-old Quaker named Polly Brokaw. She's a founder of the Cincinnati Alliance for Responsible Energy (CARE), which took part in the successful fight to stop the Zimmer nuclear power plant near Cincinnati.

In the late '70s she happened to see a map showing nuclear weapons facilities in Ohio. Fernald, less than 20 miles northwest of Cincinnati, was on the map. Wondering what it was and why she had never heard of it, Brokaw drove out to the plant and found a creek, Paddy's Run, flowing through the site. With a teakettle she collected some water from the creek and took it to a laboratory at the University of Cincinnati.

"It tickled the Geiger counter," she says.

Later she returned to the plant with two other CARE activists, Thomas Carpenter and her son, David Fankhauser, a geneticist. They took a more scientific sampling of soil and water and found elevated radiation levels.

Carpenter could find little information about the plant in the library, so in 1979 he filed his first of many Freedom of Information Act requests. He received documents showing that carelessness and equipment failures had caused 2,000 pounds of radioactive materials to leak from the plant between 1972 and 1979.

"We were shocked at the time," he says. "Here we were fighting a potentially dangerous nuclear power plant, when there was another plant nearby already churning out

uranium on a daily basis."

Back then they had no idea that the antiquated Fernald plant, formally called the Feed Materials Production Center, had one of the nation's largest nuclear waste dumps and that it had released hundreds of thousands of pounds of slightly enriched uranium into the surrounding air and water during its operating history.

One of the earliest anti-nuclear demonstrations at the plant occurred in 1983. Polly

NUCLEAR ARMS

Brokaw was among six protesters arrested.

She refused to pay a fine and spent 11 days in jail, being interviewed by the media practically every day. "It was the most successful thing I've ever done," she says. "It really put the issue on the map."

The demonstration angered Fernald workers. Leaders of the Fernald Atomic Trades and Labor Council had requested that the event be postponed. They were on the verge of starting their own campaign to correct health and safety problems and feared that a demonstration would disrupt sensitive organizing work.

CARE organizer Carpenter, now an attorney with the Government Accountability Project in Washington, has helped defend whistle-blowers at the plant. He wanted to work with the unions. But others, believing the overriding concern was to stop nuclear weapons, went ahead with the demonstration.

Unions vs. peace work: Many Fernald workers—worried about keeping their jobs—saw the protesters as un-American. The rift between the workers and peace activists has persisted, Carpenter says.

Meanwhile, union members, who are becoming increasingly aware of elevated cancer rates in Department of Energy (DOE) plants, went on to play key roles in publicizing conditions at Fernald. Their congressional testimony helped refute the DOE's claims that there were no problems at the facility. A strike in 1985 won health and

safety-related demands, which started the plant on the road toward cleanup.

As at other DOE nuclear facilities, revelations of environmental hazards at Fernald prompted a flurry of local organizing efforts by groups that probably would not have become involved if Fernald had remained strictly an anti-nuclear weapons issue. After disclosures of more uranium emissions into the air and contamination of three wells near the plant, residents in the surrounding community formed Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health (FRESH).

Composed of many longtime residents of the peaceful exurbia just beyond the I-275 beltway encircling Cincinnati, FRESH has been particularly effective in dramatizing the human impact of Fernald. Operating without funds or formal structure, the group has helped educate the community by questioning plant officials and by inviting indepen-

Citizens of Fernald take action when "national security" leaks into their drinking water and their consciousness.

dent nuclear experts to monthly meetings.

It has demanded a comprehensive cleanup of the site, epidemiological studies of cancer incidence and an evacuation plan, as well as radiation monitoring sites and warning sirens around the plant. Local residents also filed a \$300,000 class-action lawsuit against the former operator of the plant.

Recently peace groups such as SANE, Freeze and Physicians for Social Responsibility, which have emphasized disarmament and prevention of nuclear war, have begun focusing on how military production endangers U.S. citizens here and now.

In 1985 local activists launched the Fernald Network in an effort to share information and coordinate actions. The combined work of groups with differing agendas—Fer-

nald workers, community residents, environmentalists, public interest groups and peace organizations—has encouraged Ohio politicians to speak out against DOE mismanagement.

Overcoming atomization: Sen. John Glenn (D-OH), who chairs the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs that oversees nuclear weapons plants, has demanded studies of the environmental status of DOE plants nationwide and has sponsored legislation to require independent oversight of DOE bomb plants. State authorities have moved aggressively to enforce toxic waste laws at DOE nuclear facilities in Ohio.

Despite cooperation on some levels, the groups' various agendas do not always mesh. FRESH, for instance, has tried to remain on good terms with Fernald workers and thus has not called for an end to production at the plant. Mindful of the conservative political views of many area residents, FRESH remains neutral on nukes and shuns demonstrations.

"Good organizers recognize that there can be a division of labor among groups," says Roxanne Qualls, director of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign's Cincinnati office. "There's a tendency on the part of some groups to force FRESH to take an anti-nuke position. But you can't expect groups to do things that undermine their base. FRESH has to work in the context of its community. You have to respect that."

FRESH members draw local criticism for speaking out on health and safety issues. They are accused of being troublemakers who are causing property values to decline—as if they, and not the plant, are the problem.

FRESH spokeswoman Lisa Crawford, who had never been politically active until she found out that her family well was contaminated with uranium, says, "People say we're un-American for attacking the government. In fact, we're hardworking, tax-paying citizens who have been used and lied to. We're just fighting for our rights."

While the problems that plague DOE's decrepit nuclear facilities are national, opposition has remained primarily regional. But that's changing. Members of the Seattle-based Nuclear Safety Campaign have started a loosely organized national Military Production Network to share information, provide support and training in organizing skills and help link up local groups with national organizations.

The network's first meeting in Colorado in 1987 produced a draft statement titled "Democracy and Weaponry: A Bill of Rights for Citizens in the Shadow of America's Nuclear Weapons Production Facilities." Two meetings in 1988, the latest in South Carolina, featured workshops on lobbying and the framing of issues for maximum impact, media strategies and using computer links, like Greenpeace's EnviroNet bulletin board, to exchange information.

Another key issue is building cooperation with atomic workers.

"I feel good about what I've done," says FRESH's Crawford. "I've made some people aware, made them wake up and think. And if what we've done helps to mobilize other communities, then I'll feel especially rewarded. I want Americans to know that they can fight back. Before you let the government come into your community and build these dirty bomb factories, you have the right to ask questions."

David Beach is a Cleveland-based freelance journalist.

By Joe Lockard

JERUSALEM

BEHIND THE CONSTANT FLOW OF MEDIA REPORTS on the *intifada* lies another story: what happens to Palestinian prisoners after their arrests. Stories of atrocities by Israeli soldiers and torture of Palestinian prisoners have a history almost as long as the 21-year occupation itself. Some are propaganda, some are accurate, and some don't tell the half of it.

Although the Israeli public once denied that its army and security services were capable of abuses, there is now a wider awareness of security practices and prison conditions. When members of the rightist Jewish Underground were arrested and interrogated in 1982, their supporters dismissed their confessions with, "You know how they ask questions in prison." In a subsequent security scandal case, Shin Bet (the General Security Service) was obliged to admit, when asked whether confessions were produced by duress, that its agents routinely lied under oath in court.

The ongoing failure of Israel's military and security apparatus to subdue the *intifada* has led to the country's diplomatic isolation and unprecedented international sympathy for the Palestinians. There has been an upsurge in the number of reported human rights violations as well as sheer atrocity cases, traceable in part to the frustration of the occupying forces.

Dahariya prison deaths: More than 10,000 Palestinians have been held in military prisons during the course of the *intifada*, with some 5,500 currently being held. Released prisoners nearly uniformly report abusive treatment, beatings and outright torture.

Some never make it home. Atta Yusef Ahmed Ayyad, a 21-year-old building laborer from the Kalandia refugee camp, was one such case. He died last August at the Dahariya prison, south of the West Bank town of Hebron.

On June 22, after receiving an army order to report, Atta appeared with his mother, Amneh, at Ramallah military headquarters, where he was arrested without specific charges. His mother never saw him alive again. No family visits were permitted. No attorney was allowed to communicate with him at Dahariya.

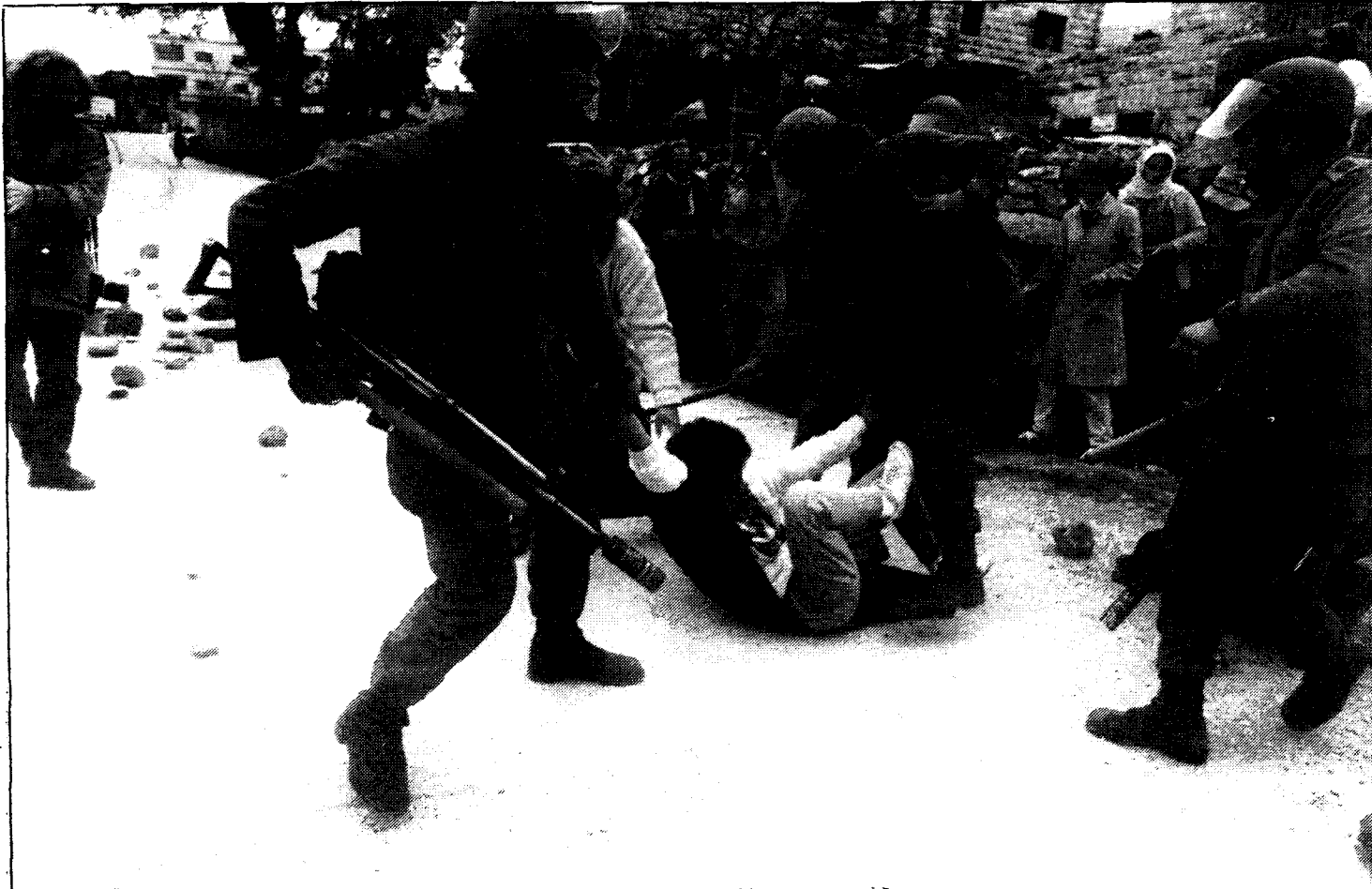
At midnight on August 15 soldiers appeared at the family's house to deliver Atta's body on a stretcher. His father, Yusef, and a few family members were given 30 minutes to bury Atta. Hundreds of soldiers enforced a curfew on the camp.

In *These Times* spoke with Yusef as he built a small stone tomb over Atta's grave on a rocky hillside behind the camp. "We dug the grave here about 20 centimeters deep. Then we put sheet metal atop him, and rocks and dirt over that," said Yusef. Later he added a thin coat of cement.

Literally standing atop his son's chest a few inches below, Yusef declared: "I have 11 sons [of 13 children]. We gave one to the *intifada*. I'm ready to give the rest of them for a Palestinian state."

Amneh, sitting with a Koran next to the grave, said, "I don't know what the Israelis will ever do, but it's America that we're waiting to see take steps toward recognizing Palestinian rights. Palestinians have only hope and courage; Israelis have the weapons America gives them."

Attorney Ahlam Haddad later filled in Atta's story. Four different explanations were given to the family about the youth's death.



It's after arrest that the rough treatment gets nasty, Palestinian prisoners say.

Detention, death and denial in Israel

The soldiers who delivered the body blamed natural causes; the prison authorities said it was suicide; soldiers at Dahariya claimed fellow prisoners killed him. Finally, two soldiers who visited the family home said that prison guards killed Atta.

Former prisoners deposed that they saw Atta being beaten. They testified that he broke prison regulations and was punished. He was taken three times to an interrogation room where he was beaten and kicked. On the last occasion, guards sprayed tear gas in the room before departing. A group of 10 soldiers carrying batons returned, beat the semiconscious man and then sprayed more gas into the room. Atta was removed to an isolation cell and never seen again.

Haddad rejects the army's autopsy findings, which indicate suicide by hanging with the prisoner's own clothes. Military authorities denied independent access to the autopsy report to Robert Kirschner, a forensic pathologist from Chicago and member of Physicians for Human Rights.

In another case at Dahariya, Palestinian prisoner Ibrahim Matur died in similar circumstances. As he was led away by soldiers, Matur shouted his name to other prisoners and asked them to bear witness to his death. Prison authorities allege that Matur also hung himself with his own clothes. Kirschner said, however, that the autopsy photos indicate beating. An appeal to Israel's supreme court to permit exhumation for a second autopsy is currently pending.

Moscobiye prison death: In a framed photograph, Nabil Ibdah is mustachioed and strong-looking. He was a 20-year-old private taxi driver from Beit Hanina, a Jerusalem suburb, recently married and father of a three-month-old son.

In August Israeli police and security forces raided the family apartment at noontime. Nabil was away, so they left an order for him to report to the Moscobiye police station. Nabil and his father, Mustapha, reported together, believing the problem was their unlicensed taxi service. Mustapha was re-

leased, but Nabil was arrested.

Two days later the family was notified by their attorney that Nabil committed suicide by hanging himself with a towel. A Moscobiye

INTIFADA

police officer told them, "It was an act of God." Later they were allowed to collect his body from the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute near Tel Aviv.

"I saw his body before the burial. We all did," said his sister Miassr. "The bones on

A land without rights for people without a land.

his right hand were broken and projecting from his skin. All the nails on both hands were torn out. His face was badly beaten and his front teeth smashed. There were cuts and large blood clots on the back of his head. Three ribs were broken. The gash in the back of his head was stuffed with newspaper."

Jerusalem observes Tory law

Though Israel is a signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention, it refuses to abide by the due process guarantees as outlined in that document. Rather, Israel bases its right to secretly detain prisoners for unspecified periods on unspecified charges on the practices followed by the British Empire in the days of their old Palestine Mandate.

Israel maintains three large detention centers as well as police prisons. One is in Gaza, another in south Lebanon. By far the biggest and most notorious is Ansar III in the searing Negev. Prisoners call it "the camp of slow death."

Reports of torture, killings and the routine denial of basic human needs are

Attorney Menachem Blum says his partner, Ibrahim Abu-Ghosh, a former police prosecutor, saw Nabil after interrogation. He had signed a confession that he stoned Israeli vehicles and was a Palestinian Liberation Organization member. There were no signs of beating, said Blum. The autopsy photographs indicated no substantial body damage. A rear head gash and broken ribs were caused by autopsy procedures, according to Blum.

In his experience representing security prisoners, Blum told *In These Times*, he has never seen torture marks. Physical abuse in Israeli prisons is limited to "slapping around, maybe." In a discussion with Kirschner, Blum elaborated a sociological theory: Oriental society is rife with violence, and Arab prisoners expect assaults. Interrogators take advantage of this expectation and threaten violence, thus obtaining confessions in most cases.

Tortured logic: Despite the growing public awareness of prison practices, the statement "We don't torture" is often repeated, almost as an article of Israeli liberal faith.

Continued on following page

legion. Countless affidavits and sworn accounts of these abuses have been obtained by numerous Israeli, Arab, U.S. and international human rights organizations.

The Palestinians are convinced that the cold indifference or, at best, scant attention given to this ever growing mountain of evidence by the U.S. government and media simply indicates that America doesn't care.

In the Palestinians' view, it is the U.S. that funds and arms Israel and is therefore ultimately influential on Israeli behavior. To them, American unconcern amounts to acquiescence if not outright approval of Israel's brutal occupation.

—Mitchell Kaidy

Israel

Continued from page 9

Yet *In These Times* listened to a young Palestinian woman describe how she had been tortured in the Moscobiyeh prison; how she had been forced to stand upright for four days in a "coffin cell" where she couldn't move; how she had been severely beaten and chained to a chair for days with a dirty sack over her head; how her health was destroyed.

In These Times also listened to Shoshanna, an ex-policewoman who worked at Moscobiyeh. "I never saw it happen, so I couldn't testify in a court," she said. "But I knew what was happening and where it happened. That's why I left the police."

There are hundreds of victim testimonies, yet most functionaries of Israel's legal system refuse to accept any of the evidence.

"My colleagues in the faculty of law genuinely believe we are living in a society

in which the rule of law has always been protected," said Hebrew University criminology professor Stanley Cohen. "But within a few hundred yards of the Mount Scopus campus, Palestinians are being pulled from their houses in the middle of the night and beaten up."

The "rule of law" is a self-delusory ideology to which Israeli legal circles cling tightly, Cohen argued. "These people find it extremely difficult to reconcile their beliefs with what is actually happening around them," he said. "But this isolationism is gradually breaking down because of the *intifada*. The disjunction between ideology and reality which serves as self-protection can't hold anymore in the Israeli legal profession."

Some organizations are taking action. The Palestine Human Rights Information Center in East Jerusalem monitors and publicizes instances of abusive army and police practices, arrests, torture and deaths attributed to official action. A human rights protection

organization was recently formed in Israel.

Red Light and the Hotline Against Violence are Israeli groups that receive and act on reports of official and unofficial violence. Because members of their volunteer staff often have substantial military experience, the groups are particularly effective in helping Palestinian families trace sons who disappear in the anarchic army prison system. Another feminist-led group specializes in women political prisoners.

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel recently inspected the Dahariya prison and described its dark, damp, packed cells as "unfit for human beings." The army rejected the association's findings.

"In the end we're doing this work as much for Israelis as for Palestinians," said Gil Meroz of the Hotline Against Violence. "Israelis are forgetting what human rights means."

Joe Lockard is *In These Times*' correspondent in Israel.

New York

Continued from page 6

fects the art of using the full power of his office to make a suspect crack and implicate others. "We investigate, get people to cooperate, and they tell us about seven people they know; that moves [us] on to seven more," he told *New York* magazine in May 1987. A few days before, his office arrested three stockbrokers on insider trading charges, one of whom was in tears as he was led through the Kidder Peabody trading floor in handcuffs. Three months later a judge threw out the charges as Giuliani's office pleaded for more time to develop its case. Giuliani's high-pressure tactics rest on the premise that evidence isn't something a prosecutor gathers before indictment, but after it.

• Giuliani played a little-known role in the broader Iran-contra coverup when in mid-1986 he indicted 11 people, including retired Israeli Gen. Avraham Bar-Am, on charges of conspiring to smuggle weapons to Iran in violation of the U.S. embargo. Some of the defendants insisted they had CIA approval, yet Giuliani refused to investigate. If he had, the Iran-contra connection might have come to light months before the revelations hit the streets concerning Oliver North. Early last month the charges were quietly dropped, ensuring that the public would remain in the dark about yet another secret U.S. intelligence operation.

Knight in dull armor: So why should a hardened Reaganite suddenly emerge as a liberal hero? Part of the reason is exhaustion after a dozen years of battling, and part is the repeated failure of reform Democrats to come up with a viable candidate to oppose Koch. Unable to challenge Koch from the liberal side, erstwhile reformists are now apparently teaming up with conservatives from the GOP. Meanwhile, as the scourge of mobsters, inside traders and Democratic politicians, Giuliani, exemplifying the authoritarian drift of American politics, has emerged as a man on horseback who will save democracy from itself.

"We're at a time in our history when there's a tremendous amount of concern over corruption and a lack of concern for civil liberties," said Harvard Law Professor Alan Dershowitz, "and Rudi Giuliani's playing into a lot of those fears." He has cultivated reporters through selective leaks, Dershowitz added, and then used the media to bring pressure to bear on individual defendants. The result has been a prosecutorial steam that may not stop until Giuliani is in Gracie Mansion.

Against the Current, a bi-monthly magazine of political analysis and debate. Current issue features Michele Lee on nationalism and class conflict in post-Tito Yugoslavia, Janice Haaken on women's self-help books, Daniel Sampson on the Teamsters' cracking monopoly and the rank and file. Upcoming: Linda Gordon on family violence in U.S. history; the crisis facing U.S. trade unionism in the era of worldwide restructuring.

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—Robert Sherrill,
The Nation,
November 28, 1988

By Larry Jagan

HONG KONG

FOR MORE THAN A YEAR CHINA HAS BEEN ROILED by industrial strife. Amid widespread public unrest—student protests, peasant demonstrations, ethnic conflict in Tibet and Xinjiang, soccer riots, racial incidents, street battles, panic buying and runs on banks—China's 150 million urban workers are increasingly resorting to militant action.

Fears that government economic reforms are eroding job security, high wages and status, particularly in state enterprises, have fueled protest. It has been particularly fierce in traditional labor strongholds, like Shanghai and Wuhan, where workers have clung to socialist beliefs in the face of China's new economic policies.

According to Chen Ji, deputy director of China's trade union movement (the All-China Federation of Trade Unions), strikes, stoppages and slowdowns are becoming increasingly common as conflicts between the shop floor and management intensify.

China's biggest port, Tanggu, which is near the major industrial city of Tianjin, has been crippled for months by a dockers' slowdown in a dispute over bonus payments.

Industrial unrest is rampant in Shanghai. Massive layoffs have triggered protests in other large cities, including Beijing, Qingdao and Shenyang, where 700 factories recently fired 40,000 workers.

The right to strike was removed from the constitution in 1982. This move, aimed at deterring strikes without actually outlawing them, doesn't appear to have the desired effect. There are increasing reports of strikes throughout China, particularly in the south and in the special economic zones.

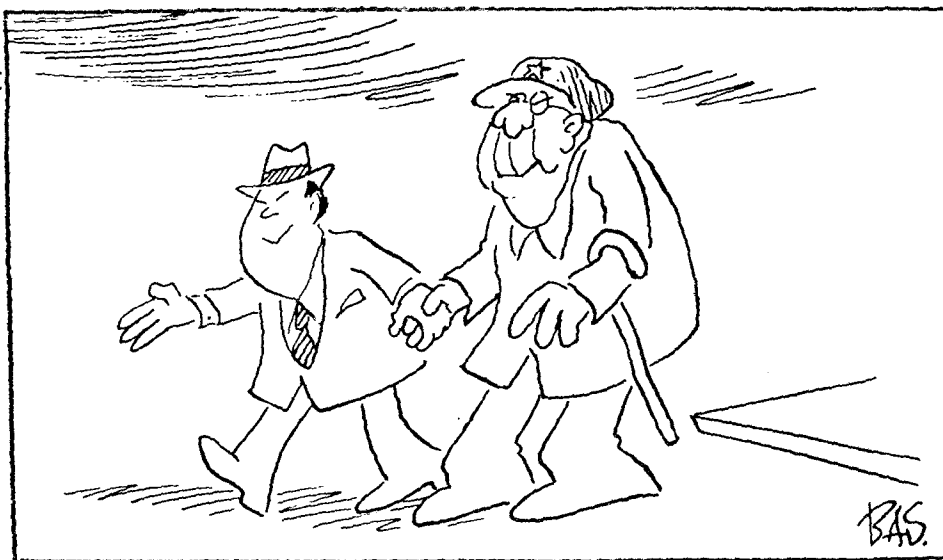
According to Guangdong police, strikes and protests over price rises and wage levels are posing a serious threat to law and order. A Hong Kong-based labor research group says that industrial strife is virtually an everyday occurrence in the Shenzhen special economic zone.

Eroding wages and infringements on labor rights are the major concerns. Prices have skyrocketed over the last two years while wages have remained all but unchanged. Last year real wages declined by more than 20 percent in most Chinese cities. Recently announced wage and price reforms have done little to satisfy worker complaints. According to a recent survey in the *Economic Daily*, the vast majority of Shanghai workers said that "price rises can only be accepted if wages rise in tandem."

Many workers believe that China's urban reforms are at the root of their discontent. Job security, fringe benefits and welfare provisions have long been regarded as basic rights. Yet wage reform, increased managerial autonomy and a new labor contract system introduced experimentally a few years ago have done away with these rights. As the new labor system advances across China, it churns up widespread worker resistance.

Industrial enterprises are told to become economically efficient; they must balance their books or face bankruptcy. These economic reforms, particularly the new contract system and management's new right to hire and fire, quickly produce layoffs. In the four key industrial cities in which these policies were first implemented, factory managers immediately reduced their workforces by nearly 20 percent.

Early last year the government announced its intention to extend the system to all state enterprises. An estimated 15 million workers



New economics letting a thousand bosses bloom

will lose their jobs. "Staffing levels in Chinese enterprises must be cut by as much as 30 percent to achieve efficiency," says a senior economist.

Distaff destaffing: Women have suffered particularly under the new urban reforms. Maternity benefits and childcare provisions have been a major casualty of management's

CHINA

drive for increased profitability. In the past China's working mothers were the envy of the world. Along with generous maternity leave, they were entitled to an optional two hours a day breast-feeding time.

Today, under the contract system, employers are hiring young unmarried women for several years, then dismissing them once they marry. Many factory managers have unilaterally canceled time off for breast-feeding and imposed salary cuts on women on maternity leave.

There are increasing reports of sexual discrimination, unfair dismissal, demotion and wage cuts. One specialist economic paper recently suggested women should return to the kitchen and leave the workplace to men. Hu Jiwei, former chief editor of the *People's Daily*, wrote approvingly in November of women giving up their jobs "to take care of their household chores."

According to many recent reports, management increasingly lays off women when it needs to reduce the workforce. The latest official statistics indicate that more than 80 percent of China's unemployed are women.

Chinese workers are paying a high price for the nation's long march to the land of free markets.

Discrimination against women is even worse in the special economic zones. Working conditions in foreign-owned factories, particularly those in the zones, are also increasingly resented. Many of their workers come from rural areas in other provinces. For example, *People's Daily* reports, there are 150,000 surplus rural laborers from neighboring Hunan province working in Guangdong.

These young itinerants, unused to urban working life, often experience appalling living and working conditions. They have no medical and social benefits and are subject to forced overtime.

Although they earn three times the average wage, many country girls employed in Hong Kong-owned assembly plants are being illegally exploited. Beijing Radio reports that "living conditions are unbelievably bad," with two or three women per bed. One Shenzhen unionist said, "Workers in some factories put in six to eight hours overtime daily and have less than one day of rest a month. Some have fainted because of fatigue and accidents on the machines [are] not uncommon."

One itinerant woman worker in another foreign-owned enterprise complained, "We work more than 13 hours a day, including forced overtime, but have never received overtime pay. The boss doesn't allow us drinking water during working hours. We are body-searched when leaving and live in unbelievably crowded dormitories—20 to 30 women squeezed into an iron-walled room—without toilet facilities or a bathroom."

Unions of the state: Many Chinese workers have lost confidence in the trade unions and see them merely as part of the state

machinery. According to a recent poll of 770,000 union members, only 9.1 percent actually thought their unions adequately represented workers' interests. Nearly 50 percent of those interviewed said that, apart from collecting dues and arranging sporting events and entertainment functions, the union actually did very little.

One in 10 unionists interviewed by Chinese journalists recently said union leaders "seldom listened to workers' opinions or took notice of their expressed needs." *Liaowang* magazine, which polled 640,000 workers, found that 70 percent thought their union either had no influence over management or actually supported it outright.

In a newspaper poll of 50 trade union officials, the vast majority said their role was "easing tensions" between management and the workforce. "We report the workers' opinions and demands to management and explain management's views to the workers," said one union official. In fact, in many recent industrial conflicts unions have actually sided with management against the workers.

"The unions have lost the trust of their members because they have not adapted themselves to the new situation," Luo Gan, vice chairman of the Chinese federation of unions, told a national meeting of union leaders last year. The government has begun heeding the warnings and has announced measures to strengthen the trade union movement and separate it from the government.

Fearful that a Polish-style workers' movement might emerge, organized labor in China is now adopting "elements of Western trade unionism." Western-style systems of representation are being tried out in Wuhan, Xian and five other major cities this year. But most Chinese workers remain skeptical. "What we really need," said one worker, "is our own independent trade union—a Chinese Solidarity."

Larry Jagan is a London-based journalist who writes on Asian affairs.

Reform-minded Vietnam looks to China

"The Chinese experience can teach us many good things." So says Nguyen Van Phuoc, Vietnam's deputy minister of culture.

Once hostile Vietnam is looking favorably on China's economic reforms. And the Chinese are belatedly responding by easing their enmity with their Southeast Asian neighbor. In mid-January, Vietnam's Deputy Foreign Minister Dinh Nhu Liem met in Beijing with his Chinese counterpart, Liu Shu-Qing. It was the first public diplomatic contact between the two countries since their border war in 1979.

It appears that China is finally giving credence to Vietnam's seriousness about reducing its army. Hanoi, which initiated peace overtures to Beijing a year ago, has been pulling its troops out of Laos and Kampuchea since last May. In *These Times* has learned that the Vietnamese plan to cut their military by almost half in the next few years.

Vietnam, with a million regulars and three million reservists in a nation of 50 million, maintains the world's fifth largest army. This massive force, which has done battle successively and successfully against the French, Americans and Chinese, today finds itself without a mission as economic clout replaces military prowess

in the global power game.

Demobilization promises to be a mixed blessing for Vietnam. Freeing up soldiers to build the domestic economy will work only if useful tasks can be found for them. Otherwise they will just swell the growing army of unemployed.

Despite Chinese rebuffs, Hanoi has been adamant in its efforts to improve relations with Beijing. It has relaxed restrictions on the Chinese business community in the south and on ethnic Chinese elsewhere in the country.

To achieve better relations, however, the Kampuchean conflict must be solved. A major step in this direction will probably come with the Soviet-Chinese summit later this year. The big question is whether China will bow to international pressure and back off its support for the reviled Khmer Rouge.

Elements of a possible deal are Chinese abandonment of the murderous Pol Pot faction in exchange for a Soviet pullout from the former American naval base at Cam Ranh bay in Vietnam. Such a quid pro quo would almost certainly guarantee a settlement and maybe even a Nobel peace prize for Mikhail Gorbachov and Deng Xiaoping. For Vietnam, it would mean the first real peace in almost 50 years.

—L.J.

The Deal Buster

Union leader Tom McNutt and his United Food and Commercial Workers local look for innovative ways to stave off corporate raiders and save jobs.

By David Moberg

LANDOVER, MD.

UNION PRESIDENT TOM MCNUTT GOT THE news just hours before it hit the morning headlines on Jan. 14, 1988: the infamous corporate raiders, Herbert and Robert Haft, had made a bid on Stop & Shop Companies. The Boston-based grocer also owned Bradlees, a discount home products chain that employed nearly 3,000 members of McNutt's 38,000-member Local 400 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW).

McNutt was incensed. From experience he knew that, whoever won or lost in the battle for control of the corporation, Stop & Shop would end up loaded to the gills with debt. And its owners would probably sell properties to pay off part of their junk-bond financing. Since the grocery enterprise was the traditional core of Stop & Shop's business—and at that moment the most profitable part—Bradlees would be most expendable. And the Bradlees stores most likely to be on the chopping block included the relatively new and less profitable ones around the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland—Local 400's turf.

McNutt decided to fight the takeover. Although Kohlberg Kravits Roberts (KKR), takeover specialists who set records with their purchase of RJR Nabisco, wound up purchasing Stop & Shop in a \$1.23 billion "white knight" leveraged buyout last March, McNutt is still fighting. Last November Local 400 sued the Hafts and their Dart Group Corp., a \$400 million firm that started in 1954 as a Washington discount drugstore, charging them with wrongfully destroying the jobs and futures of thousands of Bradlees' workers. McNutt is taking a well-established common law principle and pushing it into unexplored legal territory, but if his long-shot challenge succeeds, takeovers will never be the same again.

On another front, McNutt is trying to unionize workers at the Hechinger home improvement stores. The Washington landmark chain, controlled by the prominent liberal Democratic family of John Hechinger Sr., bought 33 Bradlees stores and will close them around the end of February. Hechinger made no promise to hire any of 4,000 or more union employees if some of the facilities are eventually reopened as regular Hechinger stores.

A man with a message: McNutt, 47, is a scrappy and innovative—but otherwise self-described conservative—business unionist. He wants to see his big local union as a laboratory for the labor movement, testing out new tactics for a changing era. Strategically located in the nation's capital, he also senses his local's unique opportunity to send a message to Congress on behalf of workers across the country. And in his battle with

the Hafts and Hechingers, he wants to make one thing clear to corporate America: when playing "let's make a deal," don't ignore workers and their unions. To get that idea across, McNutt has concluded, "You've got to screw one [takeover] up bad enough or

If Local 400's long-shot legal challenge succeeds, takeovers will never be the same again.

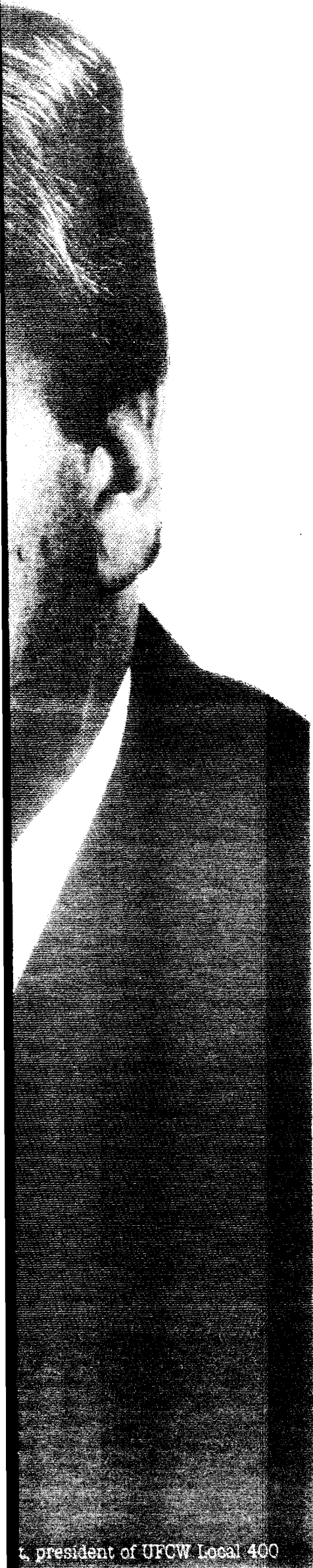
cost somebody enough so they all sit back and say, 'Let's make sure we take care of the unions going in.'"

In 1984 the Hafts sold their Dart Drugs and began raiding corporations like May Stores, Jack Eckerd and Schering-Plough for fun and profit. Typically they started a bidding war but conveniently let someone else win, pocketing millions on the sale of their inflated stock.

Then in 1986 they tried to buy Safeway, the nation's No. 1 grocer and employer of one-fifth of McNutt's local. KKR won control of Safeway for \$4.3 billion, but the Hafts pocketed a quick \$140 million. KKR tried to cover its debt by closing its Dallas stores and idling 8,500 workers, but the UFCW sued the company for breaking implicit job security promises made in exchange for earlier concessions. The union settled for severance protections out of court, but 30,000 workers in divested divisions still suffered new pay cuts.



Tom McN



Washington-area Safeway contract negotiations were underway when that takeover attempt started. McNutt threatened to strike, potentially messing up the takeover deal, and the company agreed to demands that workers keep their jobs and contract if Safeway ever sells the stores. But it was small consolation.

"Believe me, takeovers like this were something totally new to us," McNutt said. "Business had changed hands in the past, but the new owners were often bigger or ran it better. We don't object to somebody taking a business over to run it better. We benefit from that. But as takeovers developed from those early days, it was clear they were more concerned with making money no matter what happened. That's where we part company with the deal-makers." And that's when McNutt decided labor unions had to find new ways to take on such threats.

Playing with the players: McNutt, an international union organizer at 20 and the president of Local 400 since 1975, was puzzled about how unions could fight the emerging, awesome threat posed by most big leveraged buyouts. "Nobody paid any attention to us," he said. "Existing management was scrambling to prevent the takeover and structure the deal to their maximum economic advantage. The guys taking over were purely interested in money and didn't give a shit about us.... We couldn't put any money into the deal, but we could take some out. We looked for ways we could get involved or cost one of the players some money." And the player he decided to target was "the guy who put [the company] into play, especially if he didn't intend to buy it," that is, the Hafts.

When the Hafts launched their raid on Stop & Shop, the union groped for defenses. Leaders of some Stop & Shop locals were angry enough to strike in an effort to disrupt the takeover, but the international discouraged the move. Investment banker Brian Freeman, an adviser to the international, met with alternative buyers, hoping one might keep the company intact. For his part, McNutt initially won agreement from fellow local presidents who were coincidentally negotiating contracts to make preservation of Bradlees jobs one of their bargaining goals.

Meanwhile a few New England locals had also retained Malon Wilkus—president of American Capital Strategies, a labor-oriented investment banking firm—to advise on a possible employee buyout as a defense. Although McNutt had also considered a buyout, he worried that the company would be saddled with destructive debt. Wilkus argued that an employee ownership defense could take advantage of tax breaks to reduce the amount of debt and could give workers both greater weight in the corporation and a chance to share in later financial gains.

But KKR headed off worker alternatives by offering the New England Stop & Shop workers solid pay increases as long as there were no protections of Bradlees' workers. Faced with that deal, the other locals' leaders turned their backs on the earlier agreement with McNutt. But he was understanding: "It's hard to stand up in front of a bunch of guys in Boston with a great settlement [on their new contracts] and say, 'We're going to strike for the Bradlees' workers in Virginia.'" Increasingly, McNutt believed the union should have drawn the line against takeovers earlier, striking Safeway and foiling that mega-deal, whatever the legal difficulties.

From March through the end of the sum-

mer, McNutt desperately searched for new tactics. Bradlees' managers negotiated severance terms, eventually offering modest compensation. McNutt pressed for the best terms possible but kept his legal options open by never signing the severance agreement.

McNutt told Bradlees that even if the union members were not guaranteed their jobs and contract when the stores were sold, the union should at least be a part of the sale. Toward that end he and his top aides devised a strategy in which the local distributed "to whom it may concern" union authorization cards. By signing the cards Bradlees' workers named Local 400 as their representative no matter who bought the stores. And by telling Bradlees what he was doing, McNutt in theory forced the company to disclose that information to any future buyer. McNutt hoped that the strategy could guarantee continued union representation, or at least set up charges of unlawful discrimination against workers for union activity if the buyer didn't hire Bradlees' workers.

"You've got to screw one [takeover] up bad enough or cost somebody enough so they all sit back and say, 'Let's make sure we take care of the unions going in.'"

Fighting firings with fire: But over the summer KKR sold 33 of the Bradlees stores to the Hechinger Company—a well-run, profitable and powerful local chain with a flexible but anti-union personnel policy—without consulting McNutt. Hechinger did not buy the Bradlees' operations, just the store sites. That meant the union contract would be terminated, even if the former Bradlees' workers were hired on at their old places of employment.

In quick response, Local 400 organizers "blitzed" the Washington-area Hechinger stores, walking in with handbills and inviting the workers to join the union, and McNutt publicly ridiculed Hechinger's reputation as "caring and civic-minded." Although Hechinger's chain was not a top Local 400 organizing target, McNutt undertook the organizing drive and media attacks because he wanted to make a point: takeover victims at Bradlees could not be forgotten.

He assigned a new special assistant, veteran UFCW organizer Michael Christy, to take on Hechinger. Christy, who had worked in the South and then headed the UFCW's big drive to organize meat-packing giant IBP, Inc., first set out to research the company thoroughly.

"There's no company that's clean," Christy insists. "There's always a soft belly. When we're ready to go, we want all the pressure points laid out to mash them. Hechinger's seems to be a well-run, well-managed company. But if companies make a big to-do about unions, they're hiding something. There's something out there that they're afraid we could cost them a lot of money."

This comprehensive campaign, which involved attacking the company on many fronts over non-traditional grievances, is

only one part of Christy's strategy. He is also recruiting volunteer organizers from the ranks of Local 400 and its lower-level officers, calling on retirees and enlisting community-group support for the organizing drive. For example, the volunteers will start by circulating petitions against sale of merchandise from South Africa in front of Hechinger stores, thus building union ties among black community groups and locating potentially sympathetic customers. "Credibility is the name of the game," Christy said.

But beyond bringing credibility to the union's pitch to prospective members, the volunteers expand the union's numbers, save money and strengthen the union in their own workplaces. The other part of the game is tenacity, and Local 400 has the resources and will to stay with its campaign as long as it takes.

At first McNutt had counted on using the ousted Bradlees workers as shock troops for organizing Hechinger, either by getting them into the reopened stores or as part of efforts to tie up Hechinger in legal battles. Then after the local studied the sites, McNutt concluded that Hechinger had bought the locations mainly to block entry of a discount competitor into the area. His view seemed to be vindicated last October when Hechinger revealed that it might sell all of the sites.

Instead of ending their organizing retaliation, this analysis "made us more angry," McNutt said. "They were just going to exploit the locations. There was no hope for the people" to be hired. There wouldn't be any new stores.

Going to court: McNutt takes the Hechinger organizing seriously, but he saves his real passion for the legal battle with the Hafts. The liberal Hechingers "have some consideration for people, although not enough or we wouldn't be here," McNutt said. "But I don't think Hafts have that same consideration. They know they're exploiting, and they do it with malice."

They also seem to always make their millions and escape. The Hafts caused the union grief by preying on its employers, but in their raids, they formed direct relations with only stockholders and corporate executives, not the workers. "Upon what theory do you get involved between two corporate types?" mused Carey Butsavage, attorney for Local 400. "Your contractual rights are vis-à-vis your employer. But how do you relate to someone who is trying to take over the company?"

McNutt and Butsavage first thought about legislation, such as some state laws that require corporate directors to consider workers and their communities as well as stockholder interests. But McNutt noted some proposed Maryland legislation wouldn't have helped in the Stop & Shop case: all the corporate parties were registered in Delaware. And when Butsavage suggested to legislators that they require raiders to set aside a year's wages and benefits in an escrow account for any displaced workers, the response was curt: "You're nuts."

Labor law also seemed to offer no openings. But then in late July Butsavage learned of a \$30 million damage suit filed by the Glass, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers union against Wickes Companies for its hostile raid against Owens-Corning Fiberglas. The formerly bankrupt Wickes—which had been fined \$300,000 for security laws violations in the raid and has subsequently been swallowed by another shark—forced Owens-

Continued on page 22

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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Supreme Court takes a big step backward

Last week, in a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court voided a Richmond, Va., law awarding 30 percent of public works contracts to minority-owned contractors. The decision, which is expected to invalidate similar minority set-aside laws in effect in 36 states and some 200 local jurisdictions, seriously erodes the affirmative action approach to racial and sexual discrimination by adopting a strict standard of judicial interpretation.

In her majority opinion, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor held that the Richmond law violated the 14th Amendment by denying white contractors equal protection of the law. Minority set-asides, O'Connor wrote, could not be justified on grounds of historical or general discrimination, but only in the face of "identified discrimination," either by government or private parties. In this case, she wrote, the 30 percent quota "cannot in any realistic sense be tied to any injury suffered by anyone." Therefore, the Richmond city council's designation of the plan as "remedial" was "entitled to little or no weight."

O'Connor's main argument rested on a distinction between entry-level jobs and those requiring "special qualifications." In the employment context, she wrote, gross statistical disparities may constitute "prima facie proof of a pattern and practice of discrimination" for "certain entry-level positions or positions requiring minimal training." In such cases "statistical comparisons of the racial composition of the work force to the racial composition of the relevant population" may prove a pattern of discrimination. "But where special qualifications are necessary," she argued, "the relevant statistical pool for purposes of demonstrating discriminatory exclusion must be the number of minorities qualified to undertake the particular task."

In the Richmond case, O'Connor pointed out, "the city does not even know how many Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) in the relevant market are qualified to undertake prime or subcontracting work in public construction projects." Without such information, she claimed, it is impossible to tell if minorities have been discriminated against. O'Connor dismissed evidence that MBE membership in local contractors' associations is "extremely

low." For low minority membership in these associations to be relevant, she wrote, "the city would have to link it to the number of local MBEs eligible for membership." Only if the statistical disparity between eligible MBEs and MBE membership were great enough could an inference of discrimination arise. Then, and only then, might the city impose quotas. In other words, since there may be few minority contractors compared to the number of white contractors in the Richmond area, low MBE membership in contractors' associations does not constitute discrimination.

Catch-22 argument: There are few black contractors in Richmond and lots of white contractors. Therefore if black contractors get only a few of the contracts awarded it is not discrimination. But how, then, does the number of black contractors ever increase so that their number is roughly commensurate with the relative size of the black population? According to O'Connor that is not the government's business. History is irrelevant. Prior discrimination, however unfortunate, has no legal weight. If 1 percent of the contractors in Richmond are black, and if they get 1 percent of the contracts, all is hunky-dory.

Not surprisingly, that's just how it was before Richmond passed its 30 percent set-aside law. And, after a brief period when the law was enforced, that's how it has been since a lower court voided the law. The reason for this, local black business leaders point out, is not the absence of black contractors who can make low-enough bids. The problem is that these contractors, because of past discrimination, have trouble meeting bonding requirements. They simply have not developed the necessary amount of "financial underpinning." When the 30 percent ordinance was on the books, white contractors still got most of the big contracts, but they had to give 30 percent of the subcontract work to minority contractors.

This process began "to get a number of black contractors on their feet," according to Richmond Mayor Henry L. Marsh. And presumably, if the quotas had continued, minority contractors would have been able to establish credit ratings sufficient to get the financial backing needed to compete more equally with white firms. That was the point of the Richmond law. It was designed to correct a historical injustice and create meaningful equality of opportunity for black contractors. Absent that process, the lack of "identified discrimination" is meaningless.

But the Court has now reverted to a formalistic interpretation of the Constitution in which social and historical reality disappear. The Reagan revolution won't disappear as easily, however: it promises to live on in the Supreme Court for years to come.

LETTERS

TDU and RICO

DANIEL LAZARE'S BASIC PREMISE THAT RANK-AND-FILE members of Teamsters Local 560 "defied federal prosecutors and voted back into office elements of the old Tony Provenzano leadership" is a reasonable analysis of the election's results and the dynamics involved (*ITT*, Dec. 21, 1988). The government trusteeship gave the Provenzano-related slate a populist platform from which to rally the local's members.

But Lazare grossly misstates the position of Teamsters for a Democratic Union concerning the U.S. Justice Department's lawsuit under the RICO act against the Teamsters' international union. Lazare writes, "The 560 election puts organizations like Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU)—which does not oppose the government's suit against the Teamsters, although it would like the remedy limited to a government-supervised election—in a quandary."

In a phone interview with Lazare, Ken Paff, TDU national organizer, explained our position. I repeat it here: TDU has been on record since mid-1987 as opposing a governmental trusteeship of the international union. In October of that year, Teamsters at our annual TDU convention approved a resolution to oppose trusteeship and continue our longstanding fight for a one-member, one-vote referendum for officers who sit on the union's general executive board. Recently, the TDU steering committee and members at our latest convention reaffirmed that position.

TDU has filed a motion to intervene in the RICO suit—on the side of the union—to oppose the trusteeship and to make our arguments in court for the rank and file's right to vote directly for its international officers. We do propose that the Department of Labor should supervise such a referendum, as it did with the United Mine Workers in 1972, and as it has done in numerous local union elections during the past 30 years. The process would involve minimal government intrusion while allowing the members to choose their leaders directly in a traditionally autocratic international union.

TDU is comprised of proud members of the Teamsters union and the labor movement. Because we consistently advocate a democratic and militant social unionism based on rank-and-file power, we are not the favorite sons and daughters of the government, the employers or the business unionist bureaucrats.

Lazare states that the Local 560 election "was a watershed—not only for federal prosecutors but for certain labor reformers whose reliance on the federal government has grown steadily since the '70s." I don't know about certain labor reformers. As for TDU, we make every attempt to educate Teamsters on their legal rights within the union and on the job. But anyone familiar with the labor movement knows these legal levers are too weak to tip the balance of power in favor of rank-and-file workers.

The keys for TDU and for the entire labor movement are, first, in educating union members on the necessity of rank-and-file involvement and in fostering it, both at the workplace and in the decision-making of their unions; second, promoting collective activity for mutual protection at the work-

place, as supposedly guaranteed under the Wagner Act; and third, building an extended labor community that leads the movement for social justice and economic democracy in the nation and on the planet. This is TDU's true "quandary," not the one Lazare sets up.

Frank DePirro
Teamsters for a Democratic Union
Detroit

Daniel Lazare replies: As Ken Paff explained to me in a telephone interview on Dec. 7, 1988, "Our position is that if they are going to use RICO, they should never go beyond the Landrum-Griffin remedy, which is for a [government-] supervised election." In other words, as I stated in my article, his quarrel is not with the law but with the solution being sought by the U.S. attorney and the Reagan-Bush administration. This makes no sense, however. It is like saying TDU has nothing against tigers, only their teeth. In reality, the two are inseparable. If reformers like Paff and DePirro oppose government takeover of the Teamsters, they should oppose the undemocratic RICO statute out of which this anti-labor proposal has sprung.

New thinking

WITH HER USUAL COGENCY, DIANA JOHNSTONE argues the case for the West to reciprocate the "new thinking" from the East (*ITT*, Nov. 23, 1988). She rightly stresses the absence of it "at a level approaching national leadership."

That "new thinking" took place at that exalted level in the East is precisely what makes it new. It established Mikhail Gorbachov as a true leader and statesman. Coming from a mere thinker or analyst, it would hardly have qualified as original or inordinately penetrating.

The idea that threats to humanity as a whole transcended the antagonisms among states has been knocking around, certainly since Hiroshima, in peace movements and other less than politically influential milieus. Their influence remained marginal and failed to lead governments to adopt after World War II policies of peace and disarmament, because they would have entailed changing the social and political status quo. The government's response to the perceived threat of nuclear war (an irrationally exaggerated perception they shared and did their best to propagate) was the Cold War, variously translated into policies of anti-imperialist or anti-communist "strong defense," deterrence, "peace through strength," etc.

The Cold War created the environment

necessary for the preservation of the status quo in the West (e.g., "military Keynesianism") and the East (adding a rationale for oppression). By maintaining the semblance of power blocs on a collision course, it in effect served the parallel interests of each in propping up their supposedly antagonistic political structures and economic systems, the real threat to which stemmed from their own stagnation and decline.

Gorbachov emerged as a peacemaker on the world stage because he was a radical reformer on his home stage. The Cold War was designed to protect the status quo, and he is out to change it. When his Western counterparts are ready to tackle the reforms that their own societies' and the world's well-being demand, they will also find themselves ready for "new thinking" on world affairs. "The political mentality will adapt to the demands of our times" by yielding to the imperatives of change and reform.

Mark Priceman
Larchmont, N.Y.

Accepting the free-market myth

I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE JOHN JUDIS ("SHOULD THE government give itself a raise?" Jan. 11) advocating, albeit with some qualification, the 50 percent pay increase that the White House has just tossed—over the heads of the American people—to a salivating Congress. Though there are several points I would contest, what concerns me most is the way Judis defends the proposal that members of Congress and other high-level officials are, at present, not adequately compensated.

The main question involved here obviously is: How are we to judge what's "adequate"? According to Judis, we should not merely compare congressional wages to those of the average American (\$28,000 per year), but also to the salaries of comparable, high-level management positions in the private sector, which can range into six figures and beyond. He regards the disparity between public- and private-sector compensation for these comparable positions to be an indication of the "lack of esteem that Americans accord to government service." Such a view implies acceptance of the belief that the free market actually compensates people according to the value of their work. Of course, if that were true, there would be little reason for a paper like *In These Times* to exist. If a manager at General Motors or IBM is pulling in several hundred thousand a year, it should be ob-

vious that this has little to do with how much the rest of us value his work and everything to do with what the corporate power structure will let him get away with.

It seems absurd to try to justify an increase in governmental pay by reference to a private sector where an unconscionable disparity in compensation between workers and management is the norm. In the meantime, the least we can ask is that the governmental compensation system not try to mimic the woefully unjust private-sector arrangement.

Robert McClure
Madison, Wisc.

Rude reintroduction

HAVING JUST RESUBSCRIBED TO *IN THESE TIMES* after a long hiatus, imagine my dismay when I read John Judis' defense of congressional pay raises. What goes on here? A column of satire?

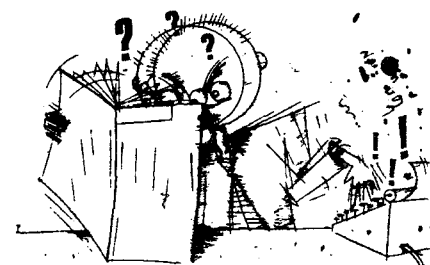
Judis fails to separate issues. We may need to pay some government agency managers more money because their technical or administrative expertise is scarce. The solution here, though, is to stop linking top agency salaries to congressional pay.

Honoraria should be banned because of their pernicious influence independent of pay raises. (No assured quid pro quo there, John! Congress is likely to define honoraria in its own loopholed way and could readily rescind a ban at some future date.)

His argument centers on esteem and attrition, but this hardly applies to Congress. The public holds Congress in low esteem because of the job they do—not because of their "low" pay. Compared to most Americans, those in Congress live well—about \$90,000 in income, comprehensive health care, generous pension and a housing allowance. And the attrition rate is minimal.

Nader is right. A huge pay raise (more than \$45,000 a year) is hypocritical when that same Congress recently rejected raising the minimum wage. Sadly, Judis resorts to name-calling, labeling critics' arguments as "pure demagoguery" and "puerile populism."

Lawrence C. Stedman
Fairfax, Va.



SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

By Diana Johnstone

WHILE AGREEING WITH MUCH THAT HE said in his Viewpoint piece, "Anti-communism as a product of communism" (JTT, Jan. 11), I would like to take issue in a small way with Dick Flacks. I cannot share the optimism in his suggestion that a sensible American allergy to "ideology" both contributed to American anti-communism and limits its damage.

Flacks is certainly right when he observes that "the really influential critiques of the Soviet Union and of the communist movement have come from the left"—but this observation has nothing at all to do with the officially fostered anti-communism of the Cold War. It is an observation that belongs on a different, more serious level. The influence of such critiques was limited to the left itself and intellectual circles close to the left. These milieus existed in the U.S. but were themselves put on the defensive and largely crippled politically by Cold War anti-communism.

McCarthyism was nastily personal, with a deep strain of ugly bullying. Especially when it came to Sen. Joseph McCarthy himself, victims were selected less for their politics than for how they could be made to look under harassment. An articulate leftist might be bypassed for a shy person with a nervous tic. McCarthyism was about denigrating "Commies." Nobody was interested in their ideas or thought them important. What mattered was that they were "plotting to overthrow the government of the United States by force and violence." The accusation had more to do with Guy Fawkes than with Communism.

If this persecution was less "ideological" than it might have been in some other culture, it was no prettier as a result.

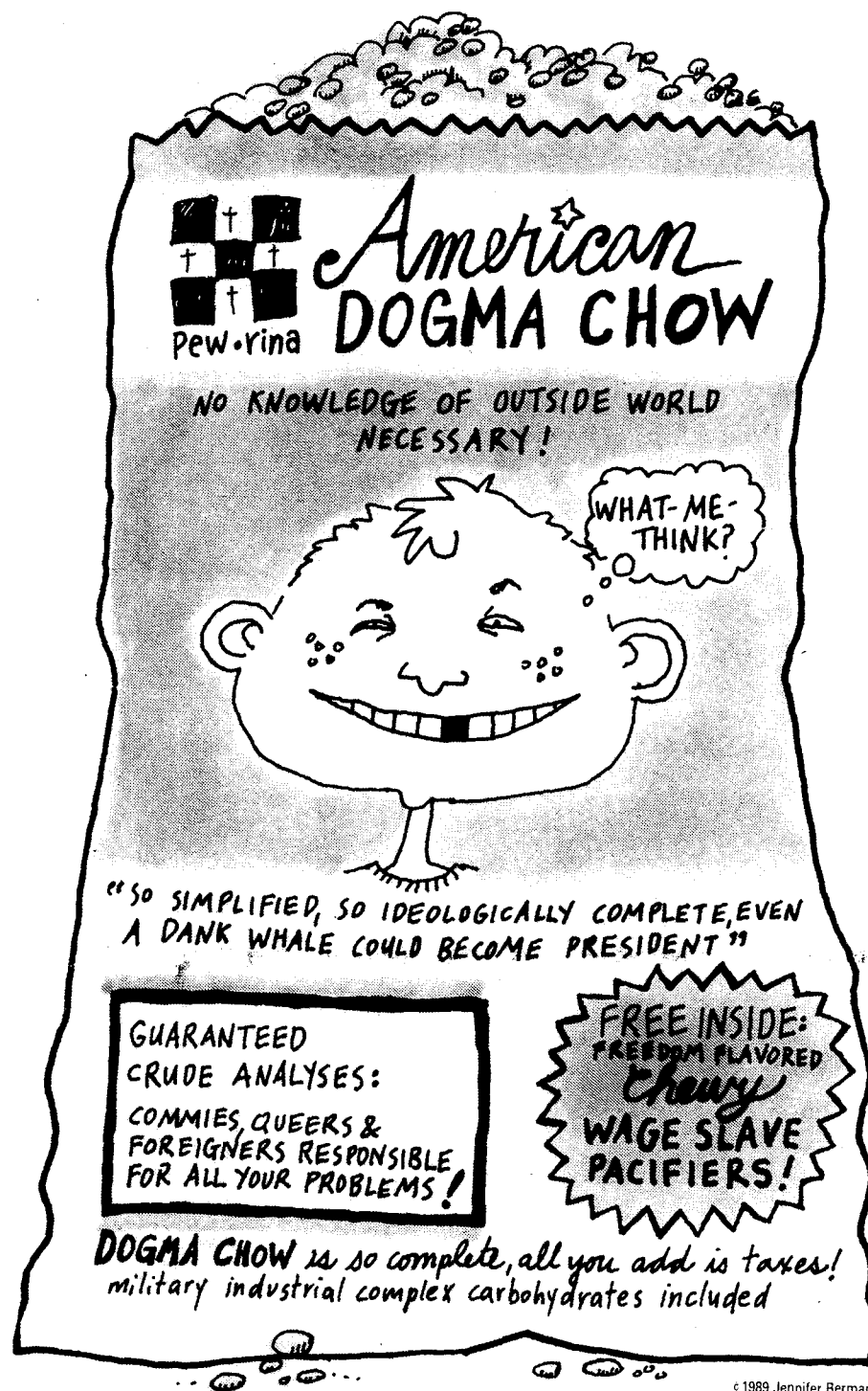
A question of ideology: There runs through Flacks' piece a certain assumption about American particularism: that Americans are particularly concerned about everyday life and correspondingly unfriendly to "ideology." If communism (the real thing, in contrast to "Communism") is identified with ideology, then the American distaste for communism follows logically from the distaste for ideology.

I have doubts about both these assumptions. I fail to see that political consciousness in America expresses the "politics of everyday life" any more than it does in other places. It would be hard to be more attached to "everyday life" than the French. Where else in the West but in America do you have groups making politics on the basis of biblical predictions of Armageddon? Indeed, many Europeans consider Americans wildly "ideological." All such generalizations may collapse under scrutiny.

Flacks says: "Leftists often despair at American resistance to ideological appeals." Such leftists, which Flacks must know better than I do, are missing the point. People in general—and not just Americans—tend to resist ideological appeals, except those addressed to traditional or consensual assumptions. What causes despair to the leftists I know is Americans' resistance to analysis, their astonishing ignorance of the outside world and their resulting susceptibility to ideology. This is the product of a school system with a daily salute to the flag and no analytical geography.

I think it would be a mistake to confuse

Does "everyday" mean simplification of issues?



Americans' rejection of communism, rooted in the country's history, social setup and extraordinarily vigorous economy, with anti-communism. The world is full of countries that reject communism—all of Scandinavia, for instance—without embracing anti-communism. Indeed, the very weakness of American Communism ought to have been a good basis for tolerance.

Fear of aliens: That American pluralist tolerance stopped at "Communism" is, as I see it, not an altogether natural occurrence. Since the late '40s, it was built by an orchestrated political campaign to win consensus to the policies of the Cold War. Certainly, there were historic precedents. One of these was the anti-German campaign in World War I that served largely to destroy what had been a large, popular socialist movement in the U.S.

In an immigrant country, it has repeatedly been possible to identify political schools of thought targeted by the establishment with some group of aliens—German Social Democrats, Italian anarchists, Russian Bolsheviks—and this has worked

because so much of the population has been uneasy about its own belonging and anxious to avoid alien identification.

I agree with Flacks that when people mobilize for extraordinary action that involves risk, "they often do so to protect their accustomed ways of life—radical action taken for what amounts to conservative ends. When people come to the point of struggling to liberate themselves from traditional ways of life, it is usually because conditions have come to a point that such traditional ways are no longer able to be lived."

So far as I am aware, this was one of Marx's insights, in opposition to utopian socialism, for instance. What he observed—and in this he was certainly not mistaken—was that capitalism constantly destroys traditional ways of life, causing a perpetual upheaval that forces people out of their natural conservatism. The objective revolutionary force is capitalism itself, with its unprecedented destructive action on all conservative traditional ways of life. The job of the revolutionary was to make people

aware of this process, so as to create a subjective force enabling people to change the world voluntarily, rather than to submit passively to the changes imposed by the economic process.

But just as Marxism was not utopian socialism, it never suggested that people would rise out of their comfortable everyday life and heroically overthrow the existing order. Communists sometimes tried to relate very closely to "the politics of everyday life." In the U.S. the vast majority of people have never felt cornered by unwanted change to such an extent that they had to turn and fight. Communists, according to what I have read, worked with minorities that were in the most immediate need of self-defense, while expecting—following Marx's analysis—that capitalism would eventually swell the ranks of the desperate. But inciting the contented masses to revolution is a form of "ultraleft adventurism" that has usually been rejected by orthodox Communists.

Communists' failings: Over a century after Marx's death, one can observe that capitalism has kept doing its job of changing the world, whereas communism, designed as the political instrument to give conscious, constructive direction to such changes, has very largely failed. Despite a number of specific achievements in industrialization, education, health care and social welfare, even in countries where Communist parties succeeded in taking over the power of the state, they have not, by their own admission, succeeded in the original ambitious project of enabling political will to guide economic process. On the contrary, they are recognizing the staying power of objective economic processes.

Marxist analysis suggested that the "everyday" concerns of a key segment of society—the working class—could be the motor to transform the world. Communists often demanded, or promoted, only limited understanding of global relationships, counting on day-to-day defense of class interest to do the work of social revolution.

I hope that the advice to be "everyday" does not imply a similar sort of deliberate simplification of issues, of deciding how much—or how little—people can understand, without even the overall strategic view the Communists thought they had.

Flacks suggests we "take heart" at Americans' "refusal to be mobilized for abstract historical projects and self-denying national adventures." One can take heart if one feels the need, but such refusal is properly human, not peculiarly American. It is normal, except in special historical circumstances. As I recall, Americans did not refuse such a mobilization in Vietnam until Indochina was largely destroyed. The eventual refusal was all to their credit, and indeed the American resistance to the war in Vietnam seemed to open a new era in American democracy. However, it has since been ideologically buried, and both Vietnam and history have been largely obliterated. The real grounds for opposing the war have been buried, and the episode has been transformed into a purely American military problem. My conclusion from this is that there is indeed a strong strain of democratic resistance in America, but that the military-industrial complex is still even stronger.

A Very British Coup

As Ronald Reagan shambled toward the stairway of Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base on Inauguration Day, Bryant Gumbel mused to Tom Brokaw that this seemed to him "quite remarkable." It turned out that Gumbel was mightily impressed that the 78-year-old Reagan had not sought to stave off retirement by mounting a coup d'état. All around the world, Gumbel said, leaders "cling to power," whereas here in the U.S. they head for the old folks' home without a whimper.

If Brokaw had had his wits about him, he would have reminded Gumbel that during many of his years in office Reagan retained in his employment at the National Security Council a young lieutenant colonel who spent much of his time formulating emergency regulations by which the United States could be brought under martial law in the event of any widespread public "disorders" such as protests against an invasion of Nicaragua. But no one was inclined on January 20 to talk about Oliver North or about the fact that no president in recent history was keener to erode public accountability and augment secrecy than Reagan.

These paeans to democracy came in the aftermath of the widely praised showwng on *Masterpiece Theatre* of *A Very British Coup* adapted by Alan Plater from Chris Mullin's novel of the same name. Introduced with visible distaste by Alistair Cooke, the play described the political consequences of a left-winger becoming prime minister in Britain and then falling foul of the security services, otherwise known as SIS or MI6, MI5, CIA, FBI and cognate bodies.

"We are at the second episode of *A Very British Coup*," Cooke began one evening, continuing, "[This is] a highly imaginative picture of what Britain might be like if it elected a prime minister from the extreme left wing of the Labor Party. Now this has never happened in the UK, as in this country the extremists both of the right and the left tend at the beginning of the campaign to make alarming, even impressive noises. But as it goes along the polls show the people moving more and more toward the center. The candidates who can't follow them fall by the wayside."

There were a couple of puzzling things about these remarks, most obviously the fact that Britain is presently run by a woman of the very extreme right, in the form of Margaret Thatcher. Secondly, Cooke could have added that as soon as the ruling class in Britain was persuaded that a left-winger had taken power, they immediately organized a very British coup against him in more or less the manner described in the play.

It happened there: There have been at least three occasions since the end of World War II when Western intelligence services organized successful coups within advanced capitalist countries normally regarded as democratic. All involved social-democratic leaders. In West Germany in the early '70s, Willy Brandt was forced to resign after allegations that perhaps he himself, and not just his main deputy, was a Soviet agent. In Australia in the same period, the Labor leader and prime minister, Gough Whitlam, was dislodged in a coup organized jointly by the CIA and Australian intelligence services. And in the UK—in the affair the prompted Mullin to write his novel—MI5 and the CIA, with input from MI6, effectively compromised the Labor leader and prime minister, Harold Wilson, with suggestions that his closest friends were Soviet agents and that he himself might very

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

well be the Kremlin's man.

These three instances demonstrate the old rule that the basic function of any "intelligence service" is always, in the last analysis, to suppress internal dissent, by the familiar device of announcing that "secret" information available only to the intelligence services reveals X or Y, the alleged subversive, to be disloyal.

Two relatively recent books show this process in chilling detail. The first was former MI5-man Peter Wright's well-known and crazed *Spycatcher*, whose sale was suppressed in the UK by Thatcher, and the second is David Leigh's well-researched *The Wilson Plot*, which describes the efforts to discredit Wilson.

The fact that the CIA and their British counterparts would have wanted to discredit Wilson shows their essential mania. Like all British Labor leaders, Wilson, unlike the character played by Ray McAnally in *A Very*

British Coup, had few radical instincts and these were quickly suppressed when he led a British Labor government into power in 1964. He excited Lyndon Johnson's fury by refusing to send British troops to Vietnam, but for domestic political reasons this was an option that no British prime minister could have contemplated.

But despite his surpassing moderation, Wilson was seen by the British and U.S. spymasters as a pawn and hireling of Moscow. In 1988 Leigh interviewed Leonard McCoy, who had been deputy head of the CIA's counterintelligence under James Angleton. McCoy recalled for him an Angleton briefing in the '70s, while Wilson was still British prime minister: "The speech he gave me was to introduce me to the sophisticated world of counterintelligence. It dealt primarily with the massive Soviet deception campaign. In 1959 the KGB decided it was going to create a worldwide deception operation and com-

pletely deceive the West.... Eurocommunism... Wilson as a servant of the Soviet Union... Soviet, Romanian, Albanian and Yugoslav ideological disagreements were all KGB deception operations.... Wilson was a Soviet agent."

Angleton's belief—for which there was never the slightest evidence—was that the KGB, seeking to advance their man Wilson into the prime minister's office, had murdered Hugh Gaitskell, his predecessor as Labor leader. Angleton, finally evicted by William Colby from his post in the CIA, poured out all this tormented nonsense to his intelligence allies round the world, and particularly in the UK, where it fanned right-wing hopes for a putsch.

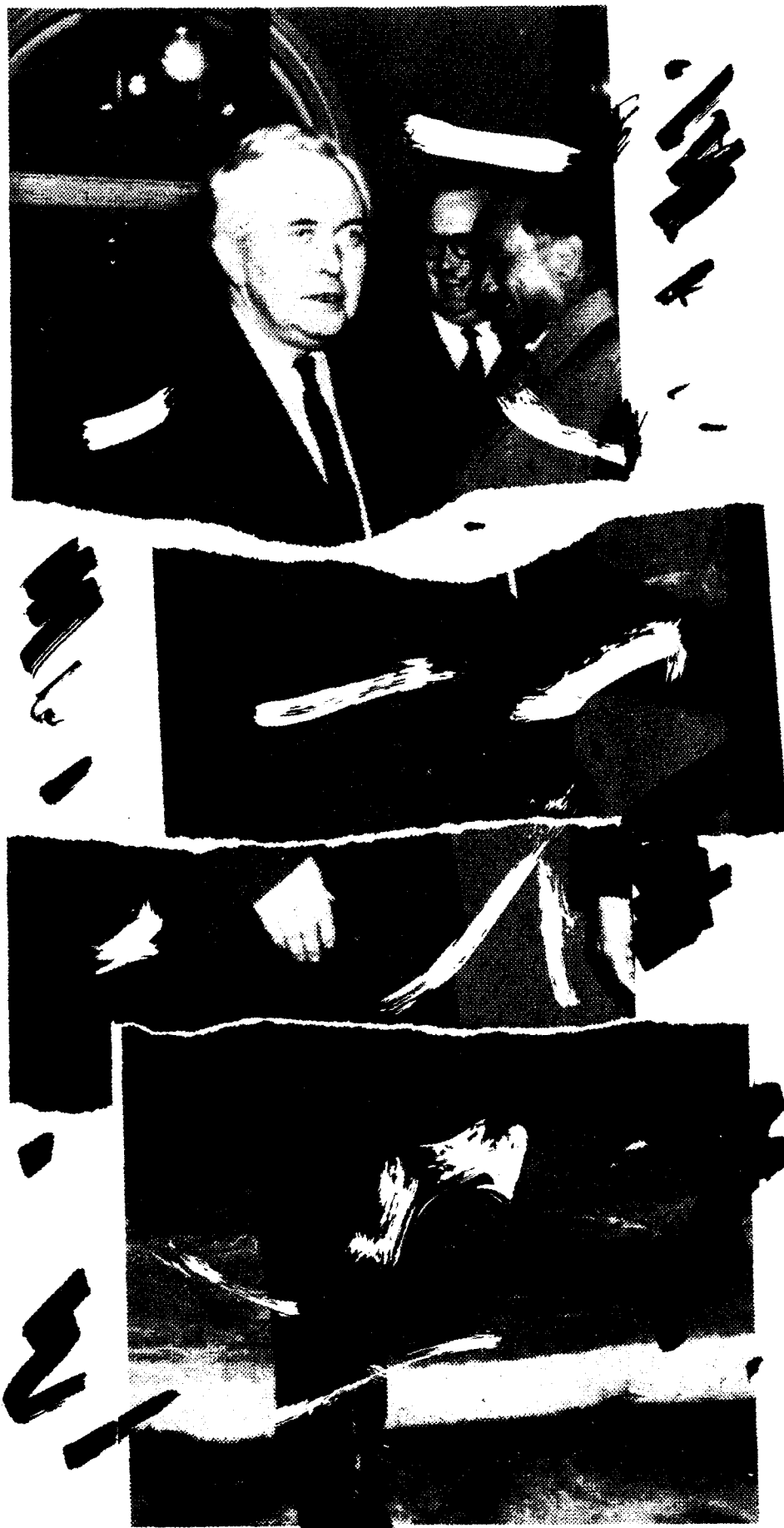
It may seem absurd to talk of a putsch in the UK in the early '70s, but then it may seem absurd now to imagine that Oliver North spent months with officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency figuring out how to lock up potential subversives, and particularly blacks, in concentration camps. Any ruling class turns to thoughts of putsches when its security is threatened, and such was the case in the UK in the early '70s, particularly after the miners handed Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath a tremendous defeat in 1973.

An unusually deranged—even by the standards of that tormented breed—newspaper proprietor named Cecil King began trying to rally upper-class opinion to a coup. Other conspirators, under the guise of possible emergency procedures in connection with Northern Ireland, even asked Cunard officials if they would be willing to yield the QE2 as a "floating detention center," as Leigh puts it, "apparently for the Cabinet." This was in 1975, and the request was made by three army and secret service people. (In 1982, during the Falklands war, the QE2 actually was requisitioned by the military.) Even the queen, in this 1973 period, began to ask whether Britain was about to be overtaken by revolution. The former Conservative prime minister, Harold Macmillan, assured her, correctly, that soon the pendulum would start to swing the other way.

unending smears about his personal life, certainly contributed to his sudden resignation as prime minister in the spring of 1976. There had indeed been a "very British coup."

So what is the moral? The first, noted above, is that ruling classes will do anything to protect themselves, and intelligence services exist in this instance to compromise, smear and otherwise incriminate anyone seen as a threat to the interests of these classes. Hence the abiding interest they have in compiling dossiers over the widest possible catchment area. The FBI spy who infiltrated CISPES, Frank Varella, has described how the FBI and the Salvadoran police share files on American and Salvadoran activists. Similarly, the FBI has kept careful dossiers on the Nicaraguan solidarity movement in this country, just as they did on similar solidarity movements in the past. Twenty years down the road it's not unlikely that some such an anti-intervention activist might be under consideration for some government job demanding "clearance," and once again the black-mailing powers of the intelligence services will come into play: the activist in question had "compromising contacts," may have been approached by "proxies" for the Cuban secret service, etc., etc.

In the States "a very special coup," along British lines, has not as yet been necessary. But the thing to remember is that it can always happen anywhere.



By Mark Crispin Miller

THE TEAM NOW (STILL?) IN CHARGE did a pretty good job with the inauguration. Like all effective "political" events within the culture of TV, that whole inaugural spectacle—Thursday night's "Gala," then Friday's ritual—said one thing over and over, made one point over and over, sent the same message over and over, just as the Bush campaign had done.

Of course, last week's inaugural "statement" was very different from the propaganda that got Bush elected. Throughout the fall, the message was "Dukakis weak—Dukakis shit!!": Bush *clean!* Bush *good!* Bush *strong!!* In absolute contrast to that divisive cry—and in subtler contrast to the imperial imagery of Ronald Reagan—this inauguration pushed the "kinder, gentler" theme repeatedly airing the promise of a new *inclusiveness*.

Rainbow simulation: For instance, the "Inaugural Gala," broadcast live from the Washington, D.C., Convention Center on Thursday night, was nothing more than one long ad for the boundless tolerance of the incoming regime. You could say that this "gala" was a great televisual salute to our diversity—if by "diversity" you mean the range of CD's available at Sam Goody's, for this was a vision of America's epic multiplicity as conceived, not by the idealists of the Enlightenment, but by the editors of *Billboard*.

You had your blacks: Nell Carter shimmying heftily through a very loud number from *Ain't Misbehavin'*, and, in another bit from Broadway, two black men doing (I swear), a spirited tap dance between choruses of "I Got Rhythm." You had your "brown" element: Julio Iglesias, tremulously crooning *en español*. And, to appeal to (or to advertise) our new leader's alleged blue-collar sensibilities, you had several C&W kingpins: the euphoric Oak Ridge Boys, conspicuously blow-dried, as was the hard-eyed Randy Travis, and—introduced by Chuck Norris—there was also a happy medley of past hits from Crystal Gayle and her big sister, Loretta Lynn ("Stand By Your Man" was, of course, adapted to the occasion), the two of them backed up by Loretta's daughter Sissy and another beaming relative named Peggy Sue.

And, since it takes all kinds to make a world, you also had your highbrow music, with Yo Yo Ma (please note race) playing Tchaikovsky, and there was even some ballet. Of course, you also had a few huge middlebrow attractions: one of those kitschy, tuneless numbers from *The Phantom of the Opera*, a peppy turn by Tommy Tune (a moment, perhaps, for the gays in the audience) and, best of all, a memorable appearance by the hoarse and bloated Frank Sinatra, who provided the only real entertainment of the evening by reverting to type, right before an au-



This year's model: the heartbeat of America—that's today's Danforth Quayle.

Watching 'democracy': the image of inclusiveness, the exclusion of reality

dience of millions.

After groaning hideously through a long version of "You'll Never Walk Alone," the old ruffian refused to walk anywhere, but hogged the stage, threatening to wreck the event's military timing by behaving

INAUGURAL

as he does at Caesars Palace. He rambled, fishing for applause, and then tried to launch into a second number, but the houselights stayed on, the orchestra wouldn't budge, and Ol' Blue Eyes started turning mean, so they cut fast to a commercial. At the height of this unexpected drama, the show's director erred by keeping George and Barbara on our screens, so that we saw the soon-to-be-presidential face slowly tightening in the crisis, the famed lips vanishing, the eyes beseeching, as if in a scene from *Godfather II*: "No, no, Frankie! Frankie! Not here! Not here!"

Deadly juggling: But even that gross gaffe did not allow Sinatra to stand out from the Gala's "diversity." Menacing as he was, he was just the show's MOR segment, fitting in neatly with the other genres: Broadway hits, "black" music (a half-century old), "Spanish" music (sort of), classical, country, country gospel, etc. True, there was no good rockin' that night, but the show's planners did not forget to stroke the televisually hip, featuring a segment by that agile, deadpan comedian who juggles meat cleavers and/or flaming torches on shows like *Saturday Night Live*—that ironist appearing shortly before dozens of little girls from Utah, wearing buckskin skirts and cowboy hats, came out and played violins, creating a sound that has never been heard by anyone not on acid.

Finally, in what the announcer

called "a stirring finale," there appeared the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and then, "from the Sioux Indian tribe, the operatic tenor White Eagle," a strapping longhaired fellow in a smart tuxedo. While these musical troops stood ready, Arnold Schwarzenegger lumbered on to salute both "de American treem" and "my frent," the president-elect: "I choin millions around de worlt in wishing you strength, courage and wisdom," grinned the bodybuilder—and before George Bush could realize that he's just been insulted, White Eagle was reverently intoning these lyrics:

We come from everywhere: We're called Americans.

From every distant shore, but what matters more

is we're Americans [sic].

United by the promise etched beneath the flames—

that says, beyond this golden door you enter,

everyone's the same.

When the whole thing was finally over, Bush took the stage, and, just in case anyone had somehow missed the point of all that heavily contrived "variety," he announced that, like his 40 predecessors, he too would be "the president of *all* the people." On the next day, the inauguration proper was also carefully arranged to advertise the new inclusiveness.

High Noonan: The speech, yet another propaganda masterpiece by Peggy Noonan, was laced with homey references meant to identify this administration as *not* imperially chilly, *not* mean and greedy, *not* bigoted, but folksy, civil, "caring": "We meet on democracy's front porch, a good place to talk as neighbors and as friends," etc.

The gestures of the day reinforced the new impression: Staff Sgt. Alvy Powell, a *black* Marine with a rolling bass somewhat like Paul Robeson's

sang *twice* at the ceremony; later that day, George Bush strapped on a guitar and good-naturedly feigned jamming with Lee Atwater's blues band (see accompanying story); on Saturday, George and Barbara chatted with a crowd of tourists visiting the White House; and throughout the whole event, there seemed to be Bush grandchildren planted everywhere.

All this showy warmth seems appealing by contrast with the Reagan prototype, and by contrast with Bush's own mean-mouthed campaign performance. The journalists have cheered the contrast lovingly, in part because it is so obvious a hook, and also because it lets them sound off knowingly about the man who is no longer king: suddenly Reagan was a phony all along, a mere figment of advertising (he never went to church, was estranged from his own children, etc.), whereas *this* guy is—and aren't we all delighted?—the Real Thing. Now the presidential spectacle is *not* contrived, presumably, but the mere revelation of an authentic personality.

Let us not pause here to ask why the press would never comment on Reagan's fraudulence *at the time*, and move on, as the press has done, to the Bush "difference." From what

All the family imagery, etc., may be less a vision of real character than a necessary stroke of advertising—an effort to "position" the latest product.

we know, it is indeed true that Bush has always been a very civil and considerate man, a conscientious note-writer and mailer of bouquets—in short, a gentleman, just as Prescott Bush intended. That soft gold aura of Old Money certainly does make George Bush something different from Ron of Hollywood: Reagan's natural constituents have always held Bush in suspicion precisely because of that "elitist" tinge.

However, while the new spectacle does have some basis in the presidential person, all the family imagery, etc., may be less a vision of real character than a necessary stroke of advertising—an effort to "position" (as the admen say) the latest product, to play up its incidental differences from the leading brand.

New! Improved! While supplies last: If we reconsider this inauguration spectacle without the ugly Reagan contrast in our minds, we must perceive that the whole show was fundamentally the same old thing—another Reagan-era celebration of rightist "values." Bush may have spoken softly, he may have worn a business suit rather than a morning coat, and, yes (as Reagan would say), Barbara Bush is, unlike the icy Nancy, most charmingly self-ironic.

And yet, for all her wry cracks about her own unglamorousness, her husband's inaugural bash was just as gross and vulgar a display of wealth as the fêtes of four and eight years previous—the show cost more than \$30 million, and while it went on 3 million Americans were bedding down in parks and doorways. Furthermore, all those gestures of inclusiveness turn out to represent the standard rightist vision: lots of country music, hordes of children and all the colored men blithely singing and or dancing, and tucked safely into uniforms.

And yet it was not the particulars within the spectacle that should concern us—for every journalist alive engages in the same sort of niggling decipherment. It is, rather, the fact of the spectacle itself that made that inaugural moment wholly anti-democratic, despite all those hectic, trivial portents of toleration. Within the culture of TV, there can be no real participation in the spectacle: George Bush inadvertently revealed this fact in mouthing one of Peggy Noonan's pieties. Addressing the inauguration's vast viewing audience, and, in particular (and predictably), "our children [who] are watching in schools throughout our great land," the new president said earnestly: "Thank you for watching democracy's big day."

The contradiction in that sentence, and the new president's unawareness of it, tell us precisely why, having lived through eight years of Ronald Reagan, we cannot hope for too much better from the spin-off.

Mark Crispin Miller's most recent book is *Boxed In: The Culture of TV*.

Twisting the night away with Atwater's blues life

By David Nicholson

WISH I COULD TELL YOU WHAT IT WAS really like at the Inaugural Celebration for Young Americans—Republican National Committee Chairman Lee Atwater's rhythm 'n' blues extravaganza that was part of the celebration of President George Bush's inauguration. I can't. But since I've got to write this, since I promised myself I would, even though there's no editor standing over my shoulder waiting for me to finish, I'll try.

It was like coming home from high school and finding your parents playing one of your records in the basement rec room, trying to teach themselves the twist. It was like coming home from college in 1968 and finding they'd discovered your stash hidden behind your underwear in a dresser drawer and were sitting in the living room, the baggie open on the coffee table, and your dad, licking the paper on a freshly rolled joint, looked up at you, while your mother giggled and said, "Oh, wow!"

It was like that. But I don't mean to imply that just because the Celebration for Young Americans featured the trappings of a rock concert—with top-name groups, stage lighting and smoke effects—that I smelled any controlled substances. The only smoke wafting from the audience was from cigarettes and cigars.

Conservative R&B: But, still, it was, well, weird, incongruous and just a little embarrassing, like watching your parents do the twist. Of course, on some level it's not so surprising. Atwater is 38, and this is the music he, and all of us his age, grew up with. And even Elvis' fabled sneer eventually became a Las Vegas smirk.

But still, I mean, the Republicans putting on an R&B show? The kind you might have seen a few years back at the Howard or the Apollo—Billy Preston, Percy Sledge, Dr. John, Willie Dixon, Bo Diddley (*Bo Diddley?*), Eddie Floyd, Sam (of Sam and Dave) Moore? I mean, can you feature that? Can you get to it? Can you?

It was like the scene from *Animal House* where the white fraternity

brothers stumble into a black nightclub to hear the band and there's a long moment when everybody freezes, checking each other out. It was like being back at a high school dance in the gym, with Lee Atwater as the gangly, adenoidal nerd who had to come even though he never got a date, had to come because he'd organized it, as he always got stuck organizing things. Only this time after he'd gotten up in front of the

SOUL?

band and said, "I'd like to say a few words of thanks to all the people who helped make this a reality, especially the committee..." he meant the *Republican National Committee*.

And this time, his speech was followed by, Oh my God!, the entrance of the president. The President of the United States. The Leader of the Free World. The Man. And instead of playing "Hail to the Chief," the band played "Soul Finger," the classic '60s instrumental by the Bar-Kays, with its cheeky, swooping brass and stuttering trumpets.

Can you get to that? I mean, can you get to that?

Rockin' the bourgeois: And then, instead of the skinny gangly kid shuffling off the stage to go stand in a corner or go see about the punch or go get beaten up by a bunch of greasers, the band calls him back on stage and Lee Atwater straps on a cherry-red Gibson SG guitar (an SG? The really cool guys back in high school played Fender Stratocasters or Gibson Les Pauls; at the very least Fender *Telecasters*), and proceeded to rock the joint. He took a two-chorus solo on "High Heel Sneakers," and all this before Bush came up on stage and they gave him, Bush, the President of the United States, an *electric guitar*.

The crowd loved it. But let's face it, something strange was going on. The usual suspects packed the tiers of red seats that lined the walls of the D.C. Convention Center, stretching almost to the ceiling. But amid the pouty-faced California blondes and Southern belles in backless formals, amid the balding, white-haired men and the women with lacquered hair, amid the bull-necked fraternity

boys and all the out-of-town campaign workers who left early because they bought their tickets just to get a glimpse of the president and the first lady, among all of them, *there were actually some black people*.

True, most of them were modestly-Afroed, clean-shaven New Negroes, wearing suits and ties and round-rimmed spectacles. There were some couples who looked like they vote Republican out of some sense of racial loyalty—after all, Lincoln *did* free the slaves—and who probably turn down the sound when Jesse Jackson appears on TV. But here and there were some people who didn't quite fit—like the guy in the seat across from me with dreadlocks, a faint Fu Manchu mustache, balloon pants and high-topped Pony sneakers.

"God bless rock and roll," said Bo Diddley, "and God bless America," and for a moment, before I came to my senses, I thought, gee aren't they really the same? But as one who maintains an undiminished nostalgia for the '60s, I'm not so optimistic as to hope that we're in for four years of a rock'n'roll presidency. Still, it's interesting, this melange, this smorgasbord of styles.

On the rocky road: And, not so far below the surface, there are similarities between the life of the itinerant musician and the life of a politician, especially one like Bush, so recently off the campaign trail. Both spend more nights on the road away from home than they would like; lead lives governed by schedules; grow accustomed to passing the time in lonely, anonymous hotel rooms; learn of necessity how to synthesize emotion and feeling on demand so that audiences can't tell the difference; learn, finally, as Percy Sledge must have learned (how many times has he sung "When a Man Loves a Woman"?), *that if you're going to stay in business, you've got to give the people what they want*.

But everybody knew who the star of the show was, and even when Eddie Floyd took off his tuxedo jacket and rolled up his sleeves and went to work on "Knock on Wood" (how many times has he sung *that*?), even pulling a woman from the audience to dance on stage, he didn't get a fraction of the applause Bush did when he held up his foot to show off his cowboy boots, or pretended to play his new guitar. Now, *that's* entertainment!

So, what's going on here? Is this the maturity, or perhaps the senescence, of rock'n'roll? Is this an example of Bush's kinder, gentler America? I mean, Carter may have walked the whole way from the Capitol to the White House after he was inaugurated, but even he, for all his folksy ways, never had Willie Nelson over

to sit pickin' and grinnin' on the South Portico of the White House.

What's going on here? Was it just another fraternity party, with the president of the Deks sitting in with the band for one number to show that we're all just a great buncha guys, but the band still coming and going by the side door? Is it more of the same old fascination with that old black magic that white America has always shown, the—pardon me—*dark side* of which was Lee Atwater's masterminding of the Willie Horton furlough issue during the campaign?

Beats me. But it seems somehow significant that in a show dedicated to the music—let's face it—created and sustained by black Americans the closing act, traditionally reserved for the best, most powerful performer, was Stevie Ray Vaughn

a decidedly enthusiastic guitarist who owes what he does to the black musicians from whom he learned his craft, owes them everything except his insistence on playing 11 notes where one will do.

In a way, Stevie Ray was what Lee Atwater might have been—Lee Atwater with a better voice and a little more talent, mixing his southern-fried white-boy enthusiasms with what were once underground black styles (but are now community property) to create a successful career as a white bluesman—had Atwater decided to become a musician instead of Bush's campaign manager. I don't know what's going to happen, but I do know I'll wait a little while before I decide whether Atwater was right to give up the guitar. ■

David Nicholson is editor of *Black Film Review*.

Bush bash index (apologies to Harper's)

Estimated cost of Inaugural celebrations: \$30,000,000

Estimated public money involved: \$7,000,000

Number of official events: 27

Order of this number among all inaugurations: 1

Number of journalists and photographers accredited to cover Inaugural events: 7,000

Number of trailers moved into Lafayette Park, facing the White House, for the Inaugural: 32

Estimated number of homeless people displaced by the trailers: 20-30

Number of flashlights given away at the opening ceremony, to be illuminated as Bush said the phrase "a thousand points of light": 40,000

Estimated cost to Maglite Instrument Inc. to provide the flashlights, symbolizing the generosity of private citizens in response to social needs: \$600,000

Cost of a plate of food at Inaugural dinners: \$1,500

Caterer's price for each plate: \$125

Tickets made available for such dinners at three sites: 3,000

Tickets left unsold for the dinners: 0

Number of pieces of glassware at the Union Station Inaugural dinner: 6,300

Number of security guards at Union Station to guard the glassware: 15

Number of performers in the Convention Center cast for the Inaugural Gala: 750

Number of children playing fiddles on the "Orange Blossom Special" at the Gala: 31

Number of rooms booked for Bush relatives at the Jefferson Hotel: 90

Number of rooms in the Jefferson Hotel: 100

Number of pages in the Inaugural Media Handbook: 248

Number of pages devoted to "story ideas," including the item that George Bush and John Kennedy are the only two presidents born under the sign of Gemini: 30

Order of height of George Bush among American presidents, according to the Handbook: 4

Number of raincoats made ready for Inaugural parade participants in case of rain: 350

Number of participants in the parade: 12,000

Number of inches in the recommended step for each parade participant: 28 —Pat Aufderheide

Information gathered from the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and press releases
© 1989 Pat Aufderheide

It was like coming home from college in 1968 and discovering they'd found your stash hidden in your underwear drawer and were sitting in the living room, the baggie open on the coffee table, and your dad, rolling a joint, looked up at you, while your mother giggled and said, "Oh, wow!" It was like that.

And the Wolf Finally Came: The Decline of the American Steel Industry

By John P. Hoerr
University of Pittsburgh Press
689 pp., \$14.95

Sparrows Point: Making Steel —The Rise and Ruin of American Industrial Might

By Mark Reutter
Summit Books, 494 pp., \$24.95

By Staughton Lynd

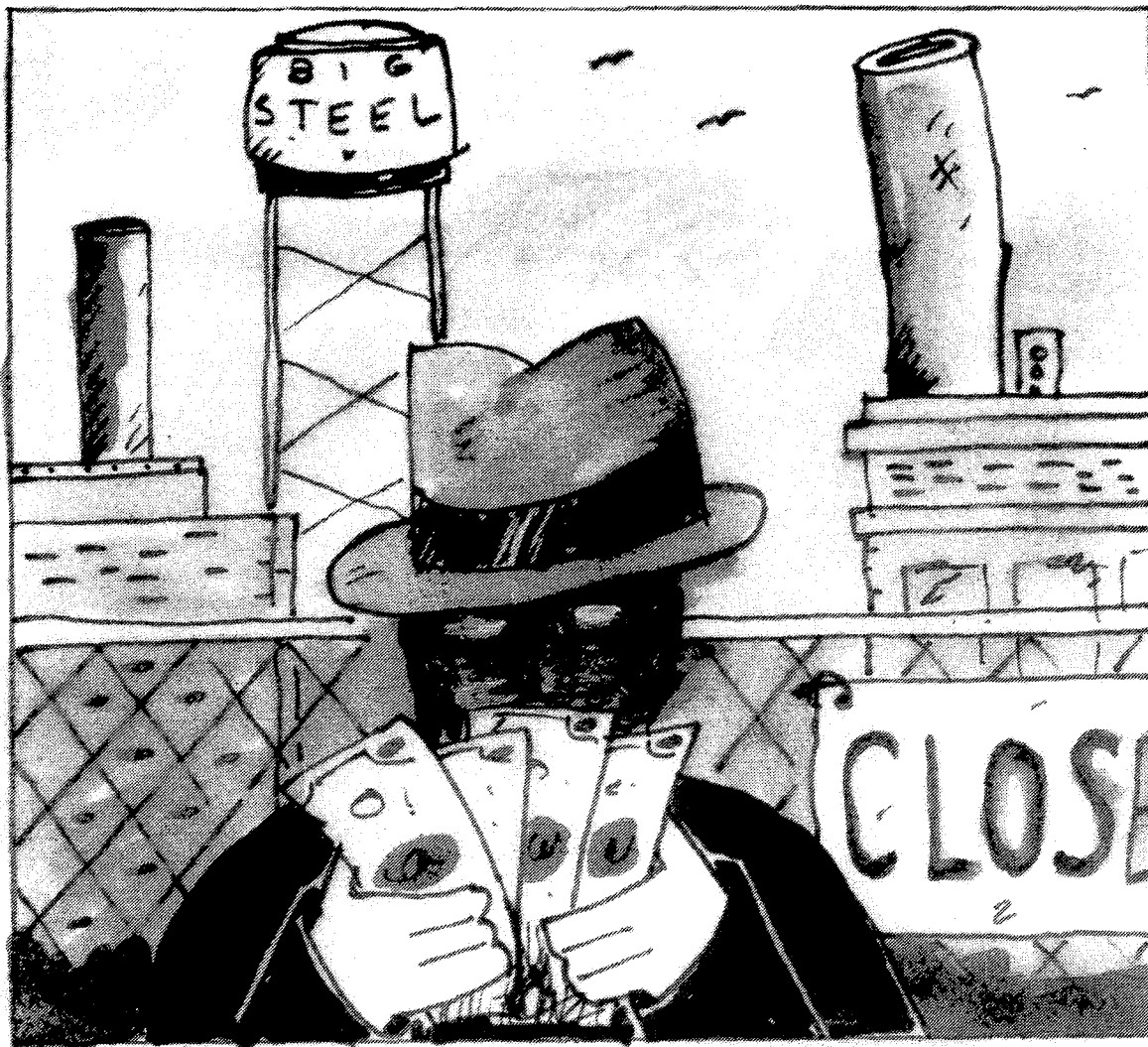
SINCE 1981 THE NUMBER OF STEEL-workers in the U.S. has declined from 560,000 to 280,000, a decrease of 50 percent. During the same period the number of persons who derived their income from steel in the Monongahela Valley near Pittsburgh declined from 35,000 to fewer than 4,000. At Bethlehem Steel's Sparrow Point mill near Baltimore, the number of jobs was 29,000 in 1957 and 17,900 in 1980, and is 7,900 today.

There may be room for argument as to whether what has happened is the "ruin" of the American steel industry, in Mark Reutter's phrase, or as suggested by John P. Hoerr, is merely that industry's "decline." In 1987 and 1988, American steel companies, operating with about three-fourths of their former capacity but only one-half of their former workers, have made profits. Yet these companies remain technologically backward when compared to their counterparts in Japan, where 97 percent of the mills have continuous casters, as against about 60 percent in the U.S.

Pension and medical benefit costs arising from mass retirements are huge. At LTV Steel, for example, there are two hourly retirees for every worker still employed. And because steel is so capital-intensive, requiring astronomical sums for improvements, the rate of profit tends to be lower in steelmaking than in alternative uses for investment capital.

Soul-searching: However analyzed, the collapse of the industry in the communities where it first began—Pittsburgh, Homestead, Duquesne, Aliquippa, Youngstown, Lackawanna, and others—has caused much soul-searching and fresh thought about how capitalism works, whether the way it works is worth it, and what alternatives there might be. These two books exemplify such thinking.

John Hoerr grew up in McKeesport, on the north side of the Monongahela River. His father was in the beer business. The best parts of his book evoke the steel city of his childhood, where the B&O tracks ran through the center of town and many workers still lived near enough to the mill to be able to walk to work. High school counselors in McKeesport (just as in Sparrows Point, as reported by Reutter) over-



Industry goes for the steal

couraged students from applying to first-class universities unless their parents were professionals or management people. Writing as a son of McKeesport, Hoerr remarks bitterly, "One cannot help but wonder about a social and economic system that sentences the thousands of people who are left—who cannot move—to lives of despair."

Writing as a reporter for *Business Week*, however, Hoerr is a great deal less satisfactory.

To begin with, there is the foreword by Ben Fischer, formerly a staffer for United Steelworkers (USW) and now director of labor studies at Carnegie-Mellon University. Fischer refers to the fact that Hoerr's "background is reflected in his concern about the disruptions experienced by many thousands of people as the industry closed plants." But, says Fischer:

It is inevitable that such disruptions take place in a free economy. If one is looking for a villain, one must look to the society, to our government, to our own sense of priorities as a people.

Profit maximization: This strategy of blaming the victim, or at least not blaming the steel companies that obviously caused the disruption of the Mon Valley, is unfortunate. How did "the society" or "our government" or "our sense of priorities" cause U.S. Steel in 1981 to spend \$6 billion to buy Marathon Oil rather than to modernize its Mon Valley plants? The blame belongs to the principle of profit maximization, which caused U.S. Steel and other companies to invest where they

thought they could make most profit, even when investment in steel was still profitable.

As early as page 12 of the book Hoerr announces his own version of Fischer's thesis: "The times clearly called for a partnership between steel management and the USW." Exactly what Hoerr means by "partnership" is never clearly

STEEL

explained. Apparently labor is to remain a junior partner, for at the very end of the book Hoerr approvingly quotes John Howell of National Steel:

I still make the decisions, but I consult all the time with the union people. I think it's a great way to run the business.

But is it so great for the union people, or for rank-and-file workers? It is very difficult to tell from Hoerr's book, because he tends to view the shop floor from the executive suites where he converses with company and union bigwigs. There are some interesting nuggets of information. Thus we are told that the \$400-per-month supplement for steelworkers who take early retirement came into existence when in 1977 I.W. Abel, faced with the electoral challenge of Ed Sadlowski, asked his advisers to come up with something that would "take the political momentum away from Sadlowski." And it is disturbing to learn that it was the union, at the urging of its financial adviser Lazard Frères, that suggested to LTV that it should secure an Internal Revenue Service waiver of a \$185 million pension contribution due in September

1986.

Unrelated to reality: In general, however, what Hoerr offers is disdain for steelworkers who resist the partnership that he espouses, and rose-colored vignettes of various plants based on whirlwind tours under company-union auspices. Protesters are called "left-wing militants," "all season militants" and "idealogues" (sic). Among the firms and plants that Hoerr considers harbingers of the partnership future are the Ford Motor Company ("beginnings of a new industrial relations"), the GM plant in Lordstown, Ohio, the GM Packard Electric plant in Warren, Ohio ("one of the most advanced systems in the nation"), Jones and Laughlin Steel and National Steel ("a new way of dealing with their employees") and Weirton Steel.

I know a good deal about some of these plants and consider Hoerr's descriptions unrelated to reality. Workers dying of cancer from unnecessary exposure to chemical fumes at the Lordstown and Packard Electric plants would find Hoerr's words insulting. His own evidence seems to disprove his argument. Thus the new "mission statement" of one of the companies Hoerr most praises, National Steel, states that the corporation's objective is to "provide a superior and consistent return to our stockholders." The bottom line is just what it has always been.

Mark Reutter's *Sparrows Point* is a much better book. Reutter became interested in the Sparrows Point mill when as a reporter he investigated 13 deaths there in 1978-79. The

Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Administration concluded that faulty equipment and/or inadequate safety procedures (for instance, a wire-spooling machine without safety guards into which a worker was hurled headlong) contributed to seven of the 13 deaths.

Eclectic scholarship: Using sources as various as the manuscripts of the man who built Sparrows Point in the 19th century, academic dissertations and interviews, Reutter finds that the theme that characterizes Bethlehem Steel's behavior at its largest steel mill throughout the century of that mill's existence is profit maximization, or profit before people. The technology used at Sparrows Point was also used in European mills where workers labored for nine- or 10-hour shifts; but at Sparrows Point the company insisted on 12-hour shifts, abandoning an eight-hour norm established in the Baltimore area since 1836.

After World War II, Sparrows Point faced an urgent need for fresh water (157 tons of water for every ton of finished steel). It would have been possible to tap into the fresh water supply of Baltimore County, but at a stiff price. Instead the company chose to use treated sewage water so that—one worker recalled—on some days "the whole damn sheet and tin-plate mill smelled like an open sewer."

Air pollution presented a similar choice. The company could have installed equipment to prevent the emission of reddish iron oxide, but the rate of profit would then have been 6 percent. The plant engineer commented: "If we use the same money just to make steel...our return will be 20 percent. Our board of directors, I can tell you, will make the decision that way."

The same concern to maximize profits, dividends and executive payouts continues to the present moment. Bethlehem comptroller and director Frank Frugler told *Fortune* magazine in 1962: "We're not in business to make steel, we're not in business to make ships, we're not in business to erect buildings. We're in business to make money." David Roderick, chairman of the board of USX (formerly U.S. Steel), likewise told Congressman Peter Kostmayer (D-PA) in 1983, "We're here to make money. You guys can't get that through your head."

Because capitalist corporations have put, do put and will always put profit maximization before all other objectives, labor "participation" in such enterprises will always sacrifice people to profits. We need public ownership that will put the needs of society first, and enable workers to participate in companies they truly help to control. ■

Staughton Lynd is author of *The Fight Against Shutdowns and Labor Law for the Rank and File*, among other books.

Pravda

By Howard Brenton and David Hare
Directed by Robert Falls
Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis

By Michael Phillips

Pravda: sensationalism and sensibility



Read 'em their rights: Daniel Davis as cutthroat conservative tabloid publisher Lambert LeRoux.

IF RUPERT MURDOCH AND DONALD Trump adopted a son, he might grow up to be the monster that is Lambert LeRoux—the force behind *Pravda*, Howard Brenton and David Hare's lacerating indictment of Fleet Street journalism.

Premiering in London in 1985, *Pravda* continues its first American run at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis through February 5. Brenton and Hare, two of England's leading leftist playwrights, met in 1969 at the Portable Theatre collective. Since then both writers have enjoyed a prodigious output, though Hare has the edge in name recognition (thanks to *Plenty*, among others). Both have enjoyed exposure at smallish venues—The Joint Stock Theatre Company—and large, such as the venerable Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre.

Pravda, which debuted at the National with Anthony Hopkins as LeRoux, marks Brenton and Hare's second collaboration in 15 years. It is a wildly sprawling, large-cast affair. Subtitled "a Fleet Street comedy," its humor reeks with despair.

Nature of wealth: LeRoux, the play's engine, finds himself continually on the outside—and then buying his way in. He is a rich, white South African owner of a cricket team, a string of hotels and a sports-wear empire. His latest acquisition: a sleepy suburban London daily paper, the *Leicester Bystander*. "What I do is a natural thing," states LeRoux. "There is nothing unnatural about making money."

That he does. Whether it's upmarket newspapers (the *Daily Victory*) or downmarket (the *Daily Tide*, described by its editor as the paper that "comes in every day and splashes round your naughty bits"), LeRoux turns each new business venture into a lesson in bald greed. On LeRoux's coattails rides the career of a young, ineffectual editor, Andrew May. Eventually sacked, May vows revenge.

LeRoux proves too much for May, and everyone else. He has no moral conscience. Co-author Brenton, interviewed by phone from London, says that "the point about LeRoux is that he believes in nothing. He's not like Hearst, who had a view of the world and wanted his newspapers to shout it. LeRoux is an '80s figure in that all that interests him is the deal."

"Faced with someone like that, the liberals in this play cannot express what they truly believe when confronted by this very powerful and rich person—he has to do with a kind of social evil. Neither David [Hare] nor I are religious men, but at the heart of the play, we are trying

to show how difficult it is to deal with utterly simple, blank darkness."

It's an utterly defeatist comedy, though in its scale and bustle it harkens back to *The Front Page*, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's tip of the fedora to ruthless Chicago newshounds. The tone of *Pravda* isn't remotely sympathetic, however. The playwrights take a hard look at newspaper ethics, media distortions and packaging of "truth"—and they do not like what they see.

In a lecture at King's College, Cambridge, Hare compared his own vocation with that of the journalist:

"As soon as a word is spoken on-stage it is tested. As soon as a line is put into the reconstruction of a particular event, it will be judged. In this way the theater is the exact opposite art to journalism; the journalist throws off a series of casual and half-baked propositions, ill-considered, dashed-off, entertainment pieces to put forward a point of view which may or may not amuse, which may or may not be lasting, which may or may not be true."

Formula for success: In *Pravda*, truth is a rare commodity. But LeRoux himself remains disarmingly straightforward in his ruthlessness. Upon sacking editor Andrew May, the malleable good man born to be had, LeRoux states his reasons simply: "You're a very confused person. You have a left-wing wife and a right-wing proprietor. The tensions in your life are irreconcilable."

Later LeRoux expounds upon his formula for successful publishing: "It

worked in South Africa. Page one, a nice picture of the prime minister.

THEATER

Page two, something about actors. Page three, gossip, the veld, what you call the countryside, a rail crash if you're lucky. Four, high technology. Five, sex, sex crimes, court cases. Then it's editorials, then letters.... Then six pages of sports. Back page, a lot of weather and something nasty about the opposition."

Brenton echoes the unsentimental sentiments of LeRoux. "Newspapers like the *Sunday Times*, which are successful and very bland, simply don't want to make trouble. They don't want the scoops. They don't want great investigative journalism. And the readers don't want to be

Pravda is an utterly defeatist comedy, which in its scale and bustle harkens back to *The Front Page*, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's tip of the fedora to ruthless Chicago newshounds.

disturbed. They want to see a still pond reflecting themselves."

Brenton and Hare previously collaborated on *Brassneck* (1973), about a family of vipers dominating a town (based on Newcastle and an actual scandal) by way of misused public funds. Brenton describes his re-engagement with Hare on *Pravda* as a busman's holiday—a project designed as the kind of entertainment its authors wouldn't have minded seeing on a Saturday night.

"The thing about a collaboration," offers Brenton, "is that it's neither of you writing it. It's like inventing a writer."

"And it's great for writing what is basically a comedy. You have to shout out each line, try each line on each other.... We rented a flat down at the seafront in Brighton for the first draft [which took five weeks]. We didn't give anyone the phone number or the address, and we'd go off and write at this flat."

Central gargoyle: The result reflects an unusual stylistic ease, which doesn't mean that *Pravda* is easy, or even all of a piece. Laid out in 10 scenes, it veers in and out of satire as well as clinical preachment (especially in Act 2). Ultimately the play is never quite as compelling as its central gargoyle.

As such, it needs a fleet-footed treatment. Staged by Robert Falls, artistic director of Chicago's Goodman Theatre, the Guthrie production gets what it needs most: a performance of genuine force and eccentricity from Daniel Davis. Rolling his tongue

around an Afrikaner dialect, glowering, clenching his fists and holding himself like a well-dressed simian, Davis leaves naturalism in the dust. It's not quite varied enough to be unforgettable, but it's exceptionally strong work.

The same isn't true of Falls' production. Some fine character actors—among them Alan Wilder, Tim Hopper and Amy Morton, all from Chicago—share the Guthrie's thrust stage with less inspired ones. Though he utilizes John Arnone's spacious collage settings well, Falls has unconsciously slowed the play's rhythms down for an American audience. It feels heavy, weighed down by a series of underlined messages; it doesn't crackle the way it should.

Falls plans to open the upcoming Goodman Theatre season with *Pravda*, so perhaps he can invest that crucial comic edge next time around. The play, though frequently witty and provocative, needs a lot of it. It's not quite savvy enough about its own impassioned political and satirical points to make it a gem. At its best, however, it's exactly the sort of project a major regional institution such as the Guthrie should be tackling. And even when the text itself becomes less theatrically charged, Lambert LeRoux is a splendid modern comic villain.

He is ample illustration of Brenton and Hare's thesis: every newspaper may have its price, and that price is truth.

Michael Phillips is the theater critic at the *Dallas Times-Herald*.

McNutt

Continued from page 13

Corning to borrow \$2 billion in a defensive move, harming at least 1,000 workers.

McNutt and Butsavage began reviewing the history of litigation against the Hafts by the high-priced merger-and-acquisition law firms employed by their takeover targets. They found that Stop & Shop's lawyers had charged that "the Hafts have a long history of exploiting public companies and securities markets for their personal profit. They have diverted corporate funds for personal use, appointed family members and personal friends to high-paying executive positions, used corporate assets to manipulate personal relationships, raided large corporations without consummating acquisitions, and extorted greenmail from their targets."

In preparing its own suit, the union called on class-action specialist Allan Kanner, who filed the original glass workers suit. The basic idea of the suit, he says, is the common law principle that it is illegal to wrongfully and intentionally interfere with someone's prospective economic advantage. "You could in theory sue an arsonist who burnt down the market where you were planning to come and sell your tomatoes," he explained.

He applies the principle to the Hafts this way: "Workers have long-term expectations of employment. The Hafts upset that. The law says you're privileged to do a fair amount under our capitalist system, but not when you intentionally hurt someone or violate securities laws. This suit is a novel application of a well-settled rule. The fact that it's a well-settled rule helps us; that it's novel hurts us."

Robert Haft insists that he and his father could have saved the jobs and made profits even with heavy debt incurred in their takeover bid. But he exaggerates their merchandising skill: Dart Drugs was in bad shape when sold, and both their major retailing businesses, Crown Books and Trak Auto Stores, have been slumping recently. Whether the Hafts actually intend to purchase the companies they bid on is also questionable: all but one small, partial takeover bid have failed of the many they have made. Yet they regularly make huge profits by triggering the bidding.

Like most outside attorneys, University of Pennsylvania Law Professor Clyde Summers feels the odds are against the union, "but the more I think about it and talk to others, the more the argument sounds plausible," he said. If the takeover bid was not in good faith but "a greenmail operation, and they could foresee and well understand this was extremely damaging to the company, and that people would lose their jobs, you get a plausible argument," Summers said. "A broad feeling that these [raiders] are a bunch of pirates" suggests that "if they ever get this to a jury, they'll win."

Much as that would please McNutt, he doesn't need complete victory. "You don't have to be successful," he said. "You have to create risk." Other workers will follow with suits, harassing raiders and disrupting their deals. "But assume you win. Then the whole industry is on notice if they don't deal with the people issue on takeovers." It's a notice long overdue.

A version of this article appears in the current issue of *Regardie's*.

Reagan

Continued from page 24

the jokes I made at the hospital, they weren't pre-scripted, either. No matter what you guys said, I was always on the job, always Ronald Reagan. Throw in the strain of meeting leaders whose roles weren't coordinated with yours. Add an actor's horror of bad reviews and think of what it was like to deal with you jokers day in, day out.

"It told after a while. There were some bad days those last couple of years, and it showed. If Nancy hadn't played my wife to such perfection, I think I might have been a goner."

"Then about a year ago, thanks to her, I began to look at things differently. It occurred to me, maybe the presidency had just been a warmup for something else. You know, I always wanted to be like John Wayne. Now, maybe I had my chance to get right up there next to the Big Guy. I could become the Last Great American President."

"What this meant wasn't preserving myself for history, but preserving history for myself. And it slowly dawned on me that there was only one way to do that: go out and campaign for George Bush. After all, what could better set me in my place in history than having him come next?"

"It wasn't easy at first, pushing him for president. Imagine, him sitting there with that bland face all those years waiting for me to keel over. And worse, he played the role of loyal vice president with such strain. The guy can't get his lines straight. That's why we made sure he said so little."

"Where was George?" The ex-president

laughed with obvious relish. "The question isn't where was he, it's where he's going to be! Can you imagine that face dealing with the mess I've left him?" A benign smile flickered across the ex-president's face as he pushed back his now empty plate. "And I wasn't bad, if I say so myself. I went out on the road like any good trouper should. And I rode and rode and rode into the sunset with that Stetson on. And the damn guy got elected. So you may have just eaten waffles with the Last Great American President."

The LGAP suddenly glanced at his watch. "Oops, later than I thought. Listen, why don't you come over to Bel Air with me. Ed's going to be in town, and Frankie, too. Tomorrow night we're going to screen *King's Row*, and that first Carter debate, and Nancy's convention film and..."

At least one of us was tempted, but realizing we had the scoop of our life, we begged off. "Sorry to hear it, boys," the ex-president said, winking, and suddenly he was once again Ronald Reagan. Booths emptied as frenzied young customers headed for our table. From nowhere a cordon of Secret Service agents appeared in blue blazers and wraparounds, little radio antennae sprouting from their ears, and began to push the crowd aside. In danger of being backed into the Aristocat's stunning ebony-and-mirror men's room, we made a break for the side door and found ourselves on the street, hailing a cab and heading for the airport.

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Tom Engelhardt is an editor at Pantheon Books.

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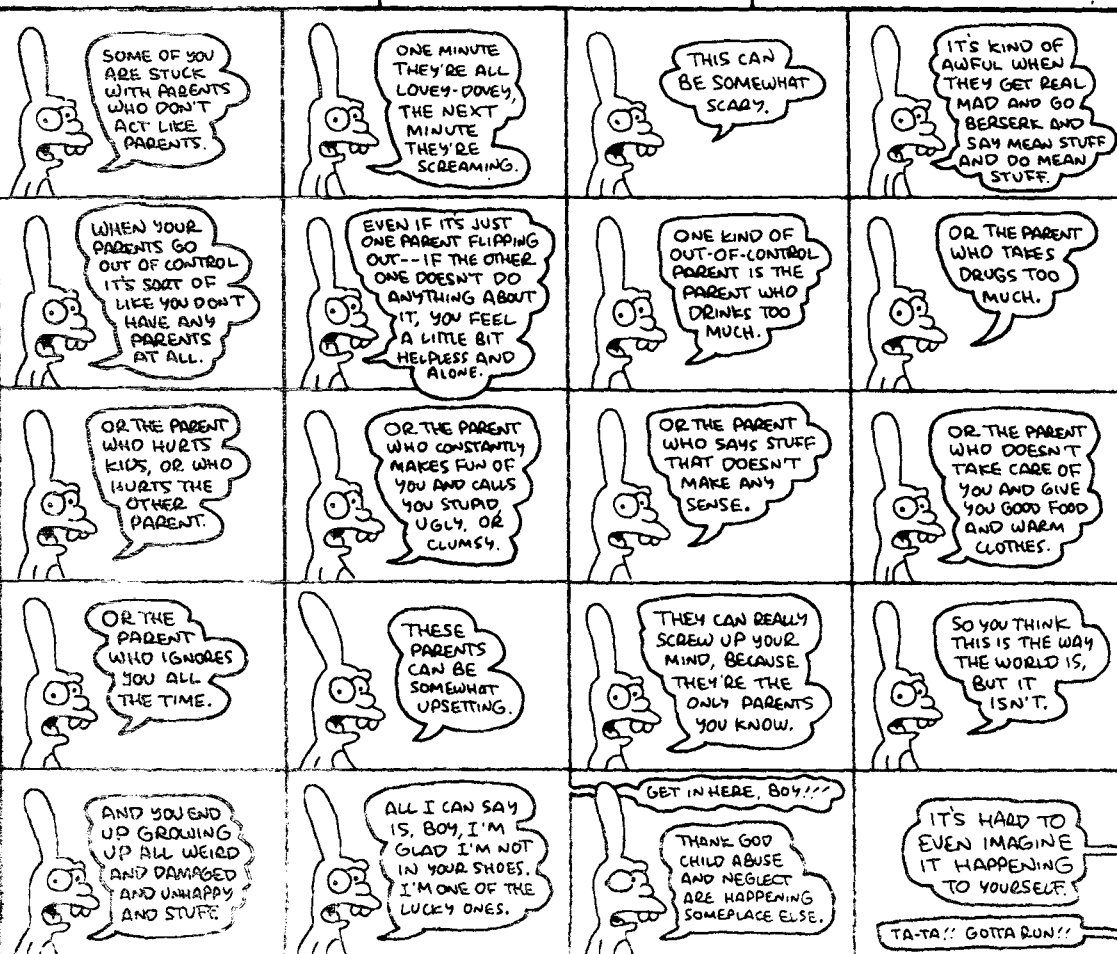
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CHAPTER 23 PARENTS OUT OF CONTROL

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Editor's Note: *In These Times* denies that news of the loss of ad revenue at the *New Yorker* is in any way connected to this first of a series of guest appearances by that magazine's famed authorial "We."

We found ourselves distinctly unsettled by the prequel to Ronald Reagan's first postpresidential interview. It was not just the unlikely choice of *In These Times* for the event, but the place we were to meet—the Aristocat, a New Wave coffee shop in downtown Venice, Calif. As unnerving—for us, at least—was the ex-president's arrival: no Secret Service agents, no hangers-on, not one sign of postpresidential privilege.

On the dot of nine, the former president simply swung through the Aristocat's revolving door and headed for the mauve back booth where we were waiting, a bit bleary from our flight in on the redeye. He was wearing the Bogartian fedora by which his press aide had assured us we would know him. (When we indicated that one of us just might recognize him anyway, the aide said emphatically, "If you want to talk to Ronald Reagan, look for that fedora.") And it was true, we noticed the fedora first. Stranger yet, no one in the packed coffee shop so much as glanced up.

If truth be told, we wondered at that moment whether a poorly conceived hoax was being perpetrated on *In These Times*; for the smiling man now sitting opposite us seemed distinctly smaller than Ronald Reagan, and his face had the blurry qual-

ity of a badly developed photo. Unsettled, we asked for some small proof of his identity.

Without a hint of insult, he flipped his wallet open to his Social Security card. "You see," he said with a wink, "the net's still there."

It was then that we asked our only question of the interview. "Doesn't it worry you, just days out of office and already forgotten?"

The ex-president chuckled. "You'd like to see me do Ronald Reagan?"

Confused, we nodded assent.

To say that he simply inflated himself slightly would be to denigrate the sheer minimalist professionalism of his performance. Suddenly Ronald Reagan was there *in person* and was promptly mobbed. For a minute or two, he signed every skateboard-shaped menu thrust at him, smiled his inimitable smile and radiated geniality. Then he did something equally unobtrusive and the crowd faded away.

When the waitress came by to rattle off

an impressive list of morning specials, not even a glance was stolen at the former First Image of our country. The ex-president chose Belgian waffles with crème fraîche and American coffee, black. "Well, you know," he began, taking control of the interview as he had the famed 1980 New Hampshire debate with George Bush, "if you'd seen me a year ago, you'd have seen a mighty depressed fella."

"I mean, here I was, a guy who'd been elected sheriff seven years earlier and ridden into town to clean up a mess singlehanded, the greatest role since Raymond Massey did Lincoln, and now my time was almost up. Of course, my agent had written Ronald Reagan Enterprise into my retirement contract, including syndication rights to speeches, news conferences, convention appearances and summit footage. And naturally we were hanging on to merchandizing, dramatic and gift shop rights for the Ronald Reagan

Presidential Video Vault, which they'll be building me in the Hollywood Hills next year.

"So I should have been up. Offers for the Ronald Reagan personality were pouring in, and some tough postpresidential decisions loomed. Only last week *Falcon Crest* asked me to put in a three-show appearance opposite Jane [Editor's note: his first wife, Jane Wyman]. But how would it look, Ronald Reagan on the cover of *People* with her, not Nancy? Then this toy company wants to develop a line of Rea-Bo fighting figures. You know the kind: Deficit-Cutter, Grenada-Man, Budget-Face, and a Saturday morning cartoon's included. Even John Wayne never got that.

"I know, I know." The ex-president's hands shot up, mock-defensively. "To you liberals this just looks like a guy cashing in. But that's because you don't get it. See, the American system's wonderful. It makes sure hard work pays off. You only get what's owed you. That's real American equality for you. Remember, I wasn't always Ronald Reagan. It took hard work, training and patience, not just to become me, but to stay me. You know, something goes out of you when you play a genial man all your life, so there should be a payback. Charm may be second nature, but I like to say you spell second nature e-f-f-o-r-t. Not to speak of that assassination attempt. Those were real bullets! And

Continued on page 22



The New Wave Ronald Reagan interview by Tom Engelhardt is the Talk of the Town.